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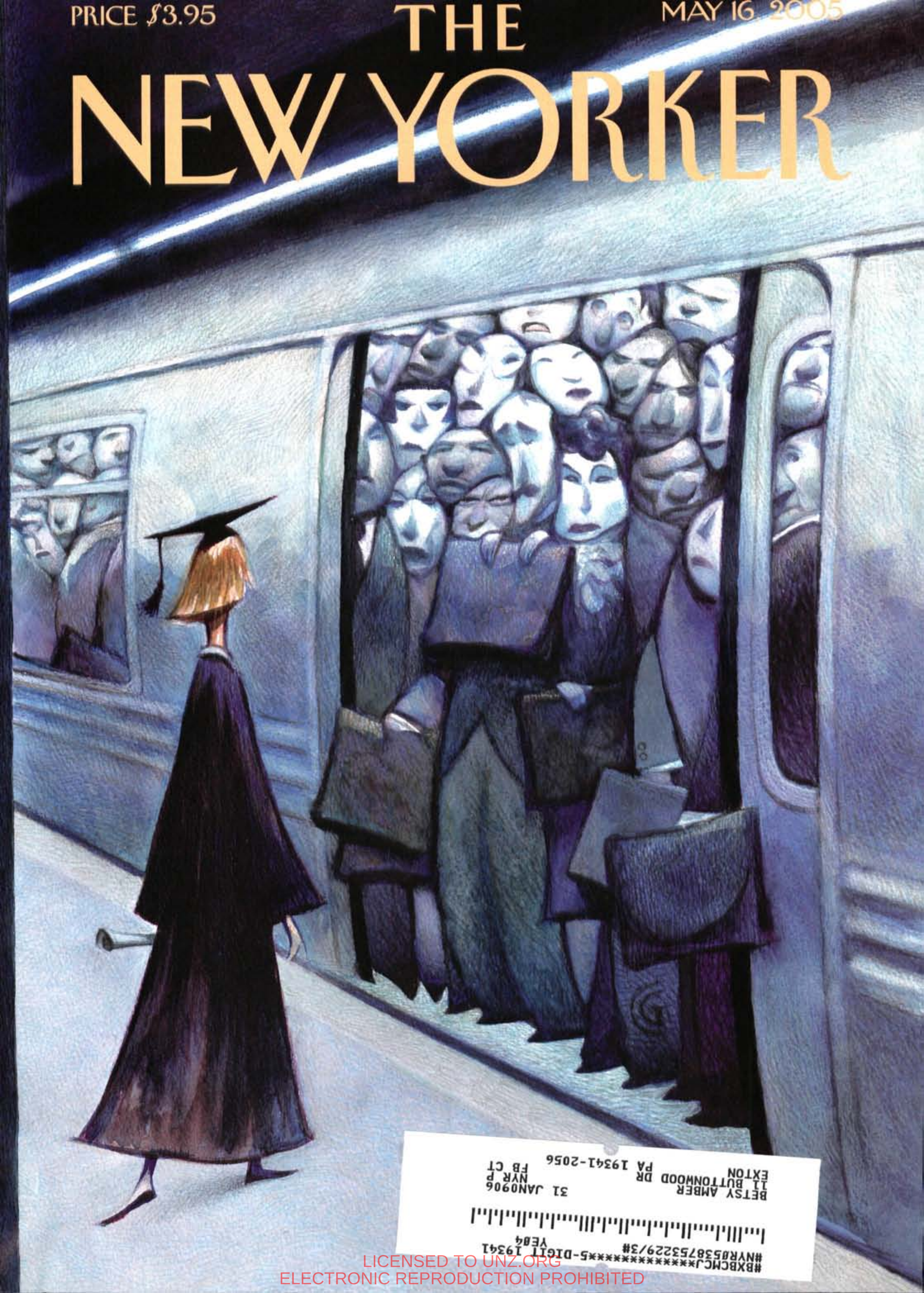

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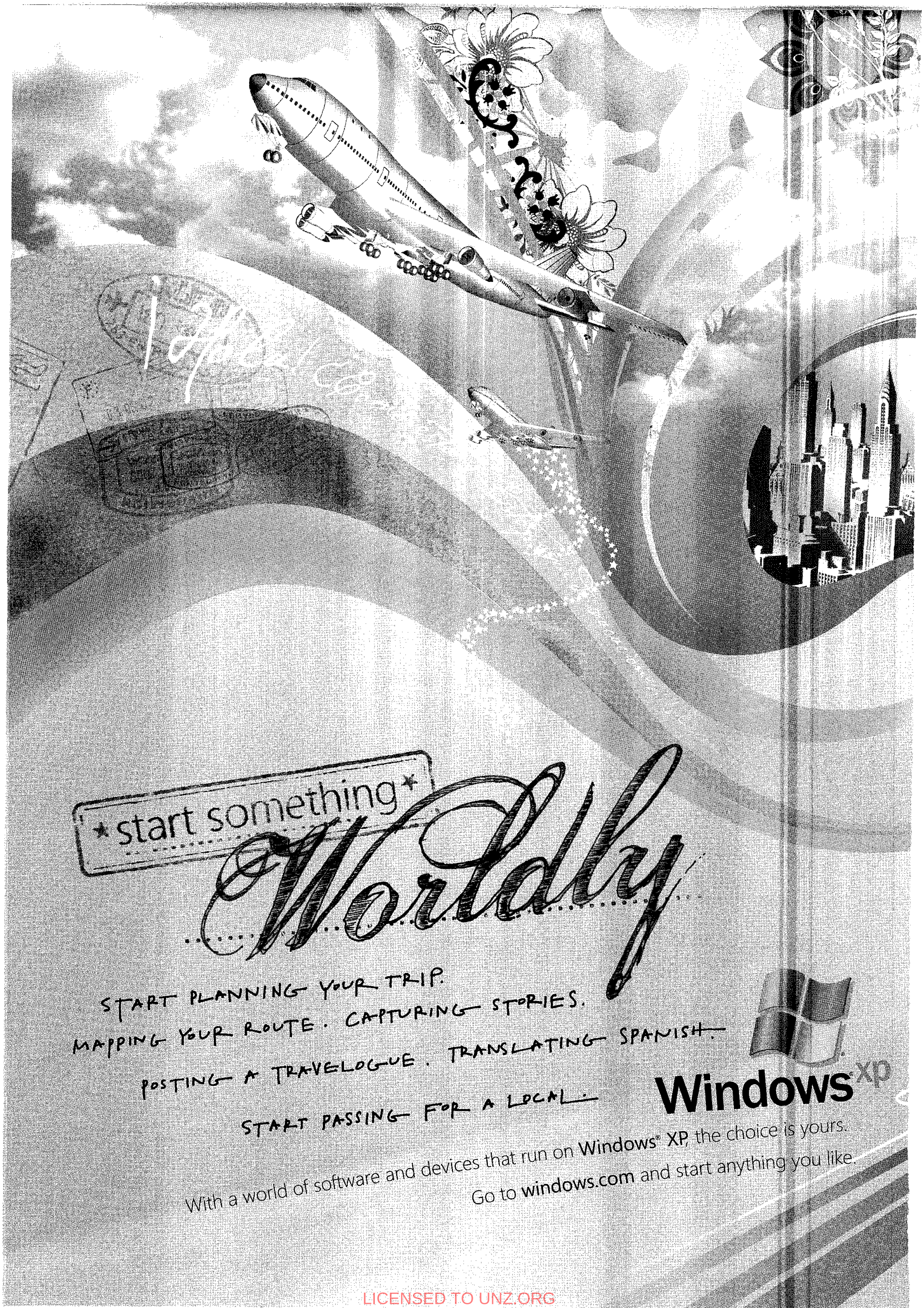
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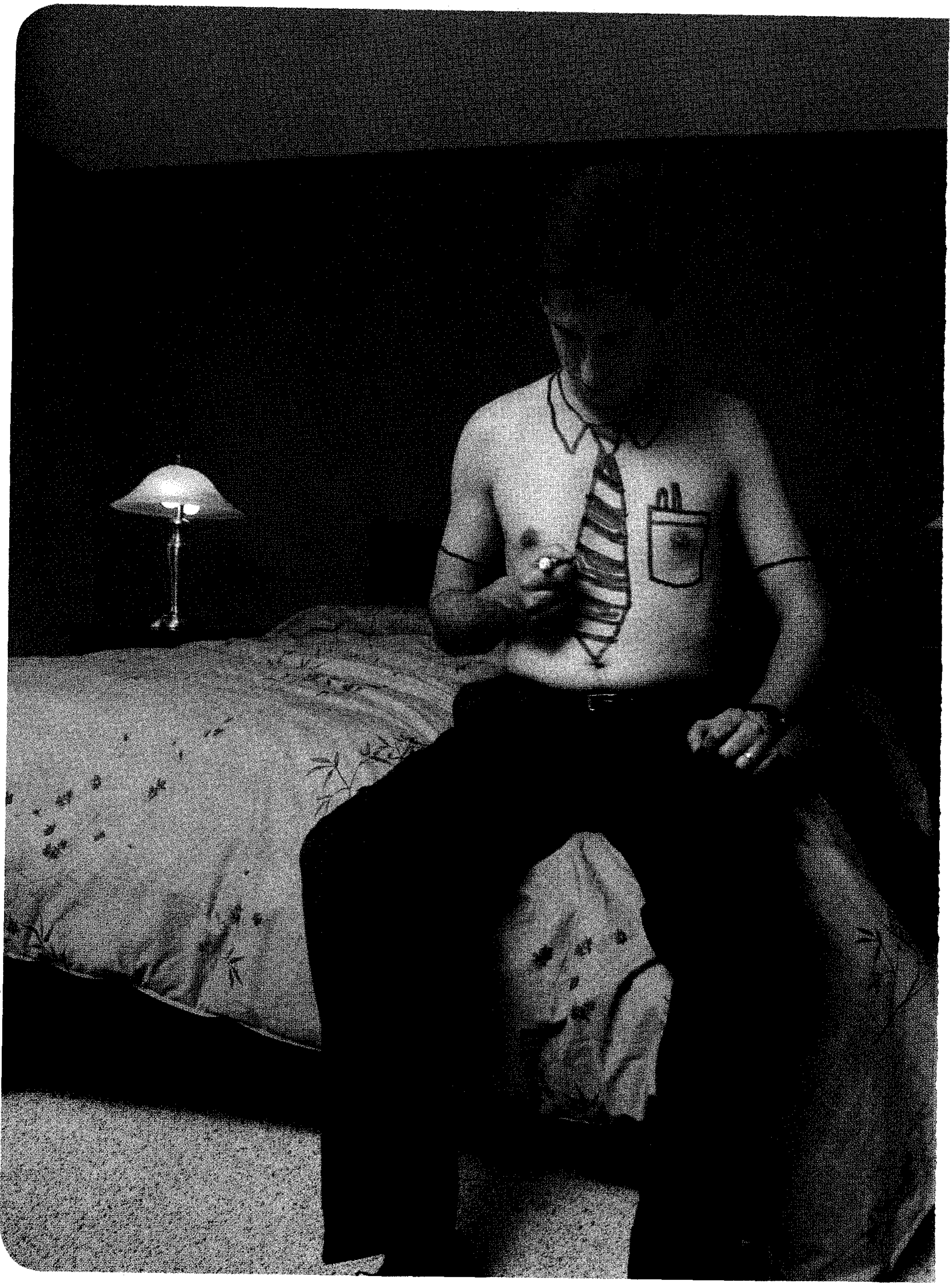

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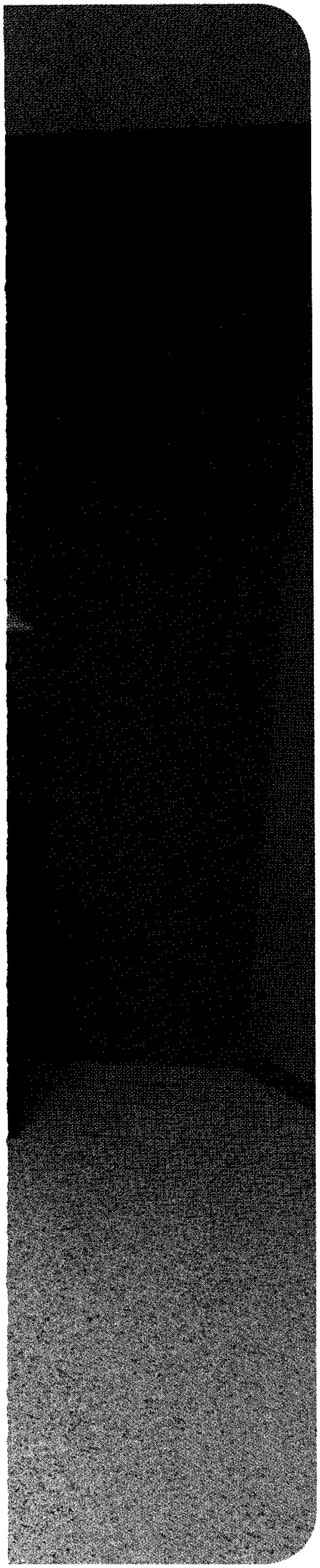

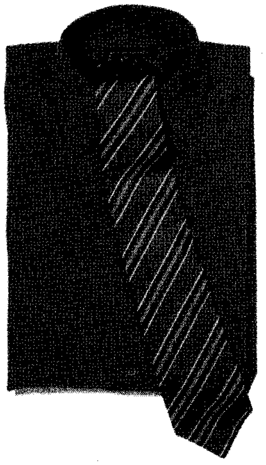

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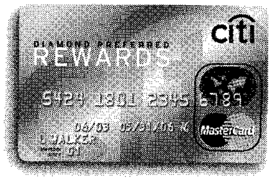
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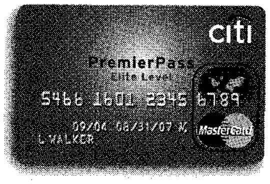
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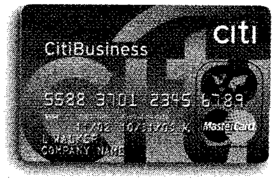
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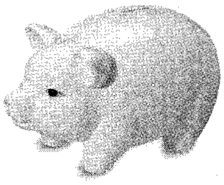

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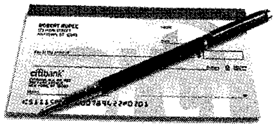

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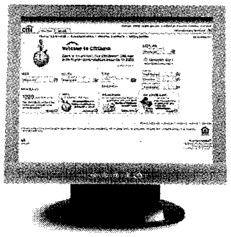
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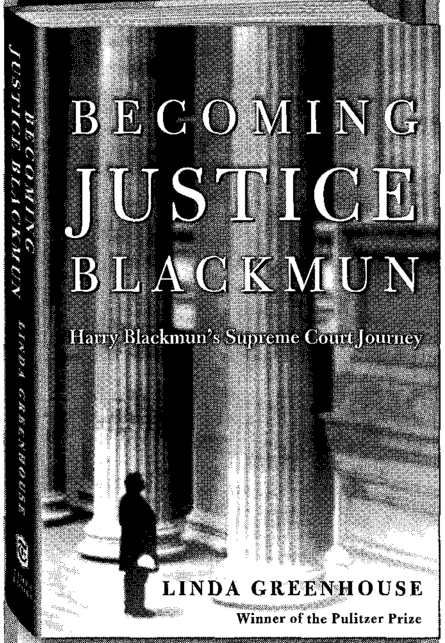
—Jeffrey Toobin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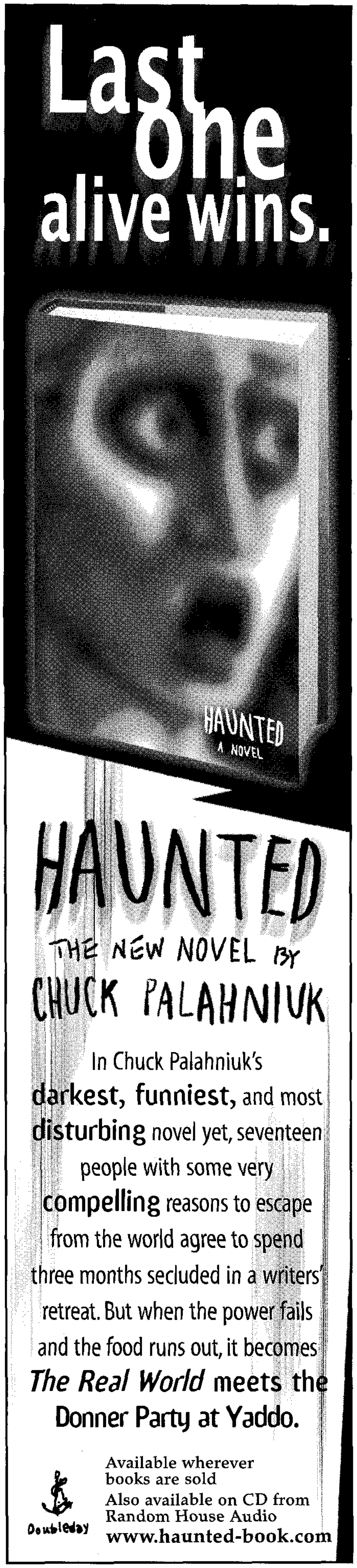

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CONTRIBUTORS

Jeffrey Toobin ("The Upstart," p. 44) has been a staff writer since 1993. He is the author of "Too Close to Call."

George Packer (Comment, p. 35) has a new book, "The Assassins' Gate," which will be published in October.

Charles Simic (Poem, p. 46) is a poet, essayist, and translator. His new book of poems, "My Noiseless Entourage," has just been published.

Andy Borowitz (Shouts & Murmurs, p. 53) won a 2004 Dot-Comedy Award for his humor Web site, the Borowitz Report.

Kevin Krajick ("The Mummy Doctor," p. 66) is the author of "Barren Lands: An Epic Search for Diamonds in the North American Arctic."

Carter Goodrich (Cover) has been an illustrator since 1983. He is currently working on animated-film projects and a children's book.

Peter J. Boyer ("A Hard Faith," p. 54) is working on a book about the American military.

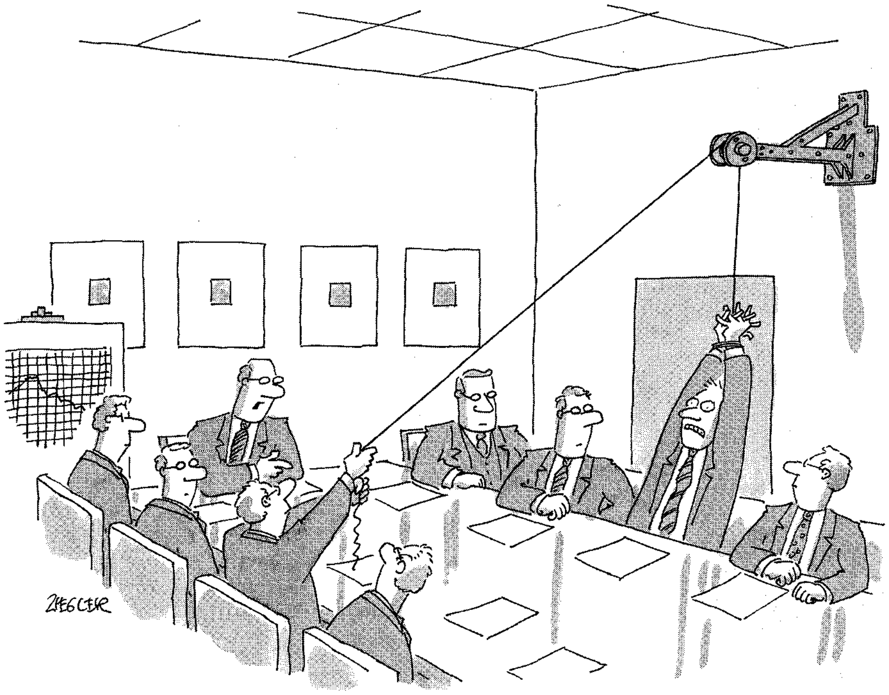
Deborah Garrison (Poem, p. 70) is the author of "A Working Girl Can't Win and Other Poems."

William Trevor (Fiction, p. 76) has published fifteen novels and eleven collections of short stories, including, most recently, "A Bit on the Side."

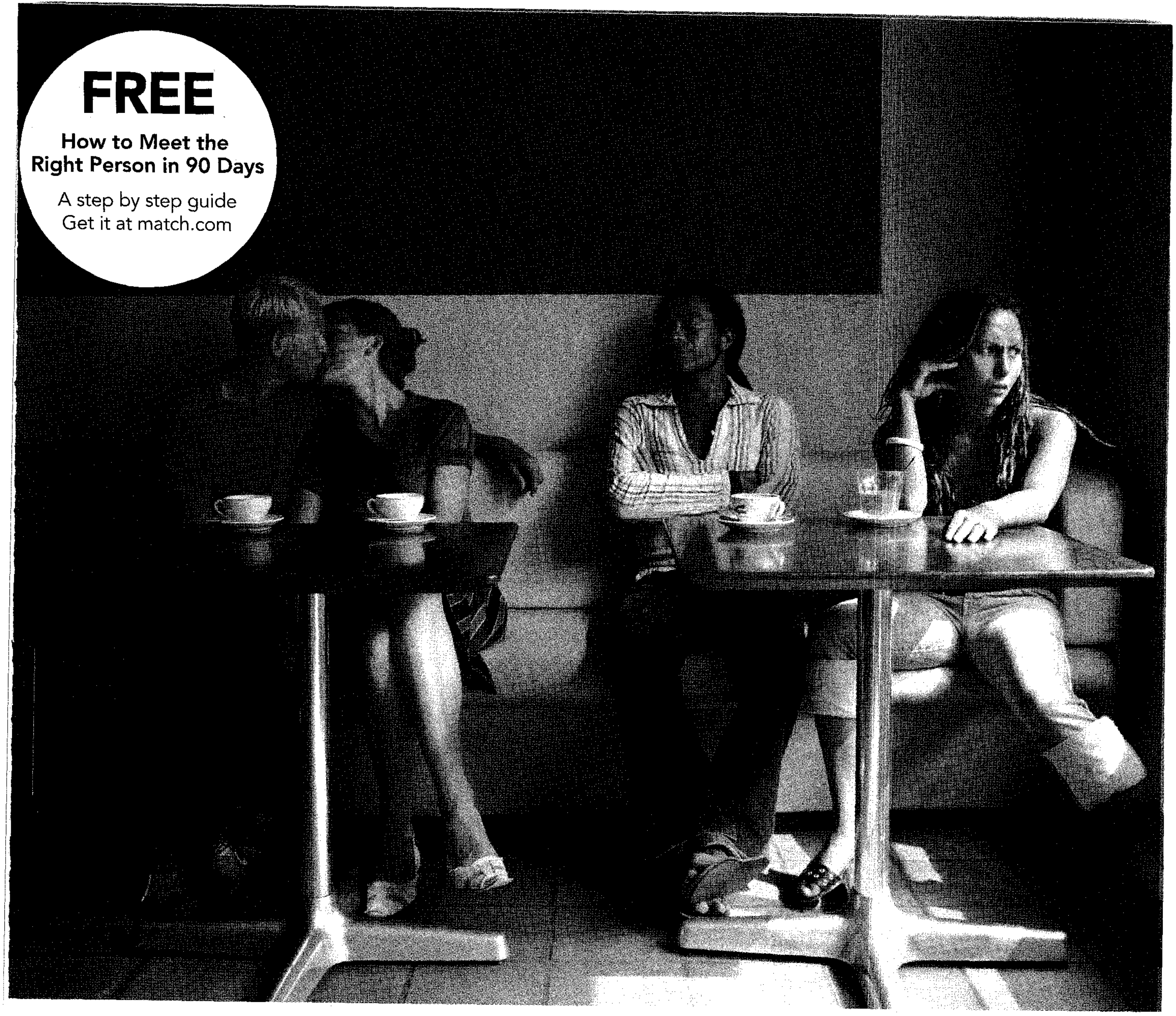
Robert Gottlieb (A Critic at Large, p. 82) was the editor-in-chief of Alfred A. Knopf and, from 1987 to 1992, the editor of *The New Yorker*.

Malcolm Gladwell (Books, p. 88) is the author of "The Tipping Point" and "Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking."

John Lahr (The Theatre, p. 93) will publish a collection of his *New Yorker* profiles of show people, "Honky-Tonk Parade," next year. ♦



"I'm sorry, Wilson, but here at Tastee Cookie Corp. we no longer recognize the Geneva Conventions."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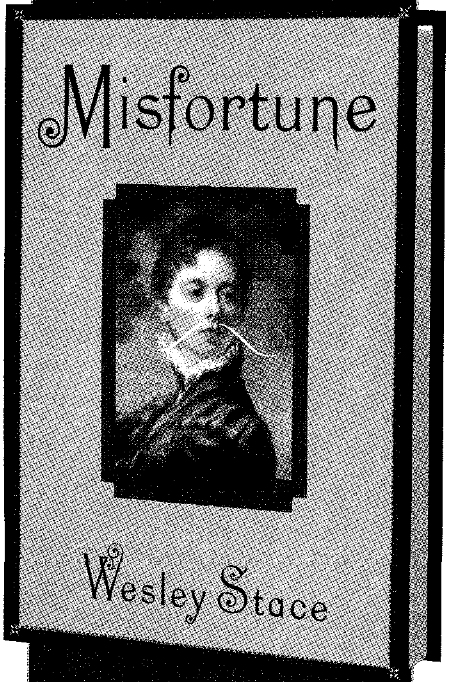

"It reads like some inspired collaboration between Charles Dickens and Pedro Almodovar."
—Rodney Welch, *Washington Post Book World*

Wesley Stace, also known to music lovers as JOHN WESLEY HARDING, has been transfixed by Victorian novels since his childhood and has written a "loopily Dickensian"[1] novel, "a tale of an orphan boy raised as a girl by one of England's richest lords."[2]

Read an Excerpt at www.twbookmark.com
[1] Alexis Soloski, *Village Voice*
[2] Gilbert Cruz, *Entertainment Weekly*®

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REMOTE ACCESS

Lawrence Osborne, in his piece about visiting the Kombai tribe, an isolated people who live in Papua, quotes approvingly a perceptive remark made by the anthropologist Rupert Stasch: "Often it's the urban Westerners who are 'uncontacted' in the sense that they're stuck inside their own projected fantasies" ("Strangers in the Forest," April 18th). I couldn't agree more. But then why, when Osborne overhears a Kombai man singing one night, does he suppose that the song "must have been thousands of years old"? My own long-term studies of sung poetry in the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea, like the research of ethnomusicologists elsewhere on the island, shows that the musical traditions there are as dynamic as anywhere else. Why shouldn't they be?

Alan Rumsey
Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies
Australian National University
Canberra, Australia

KING OF KINGS

Rebecca Mead's Profile of Marty Markowitz, who has been Brooklyn's Borough President since 2002, abounds with the nostalgia-dripping, good-guy persona that he loves to project ("Mr. Brooklyn," April 25th). However, his expressions of disdain for the neighborhood where I and many other of his constituents live come across as callous in the extreme. While driving down Pacific Street, he refers to the buildings along the block, saying, with derision and inaccuracy, "I want you to look at this and tell me in any manner, shape, or form that this has historical significance." As Borough President, he must know that, if the arena and fifteen high-rises proposed by the developer Bruce Ratner are approved, then at least four architecturally and historically significant buildings will be slated for demolition. This is quite apart from the historical, and indeed contemporary, significance of the community there, one of the city's most diverse. And all for the cheap sentimentality surrounding a baseball team that left decades ago?

Daniel Goldstein
Develop—Don't Destroy (BROOKLYN)
Brooklyn, N.Y.

MODERATE MONGOLS

Ian Frazier's piece on the Mongol leader Hulagu mentions that Osama bin Laden, in one of his broadcasts, said that during the previous Gulf War Colin Powell and Dick Cheney had destroyed Baghdad even more thoroughly than Hulagu, a grandson of Genghis Khan, had in 1258 ("Invaders," April 25th). In fact, before his overthrow Saddam Hussein likewise compared American forces to those of Hulagu. The comparison is suggestive. As the historian Jack Weatherford writes in his recent "Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World," the Mongol invasion was a turning point in history. The Mongols may have been predaceous and bloody, but they opened Europe and the Middle East to trade and fostered religious pluralism. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that the destruction of Baghdad not only was a cataclysm for the Islamic world but also turned out to coincide with the first stress fractures in the Mongols' world-spanning empire.

Peter Ritter
Minneapolis, Minn.

CORRECTION: Because of an editing error, a statistic in Elizabeth Kolbert's "The Climate of Man—I" (April 25th) concerning the Jakobshavn Isbrae ice stream was given incorrectly. The ice stream flowed at a rate of three and a half miles per year in 1992; by 2003, this had increased to 7.8 miles per year.

•

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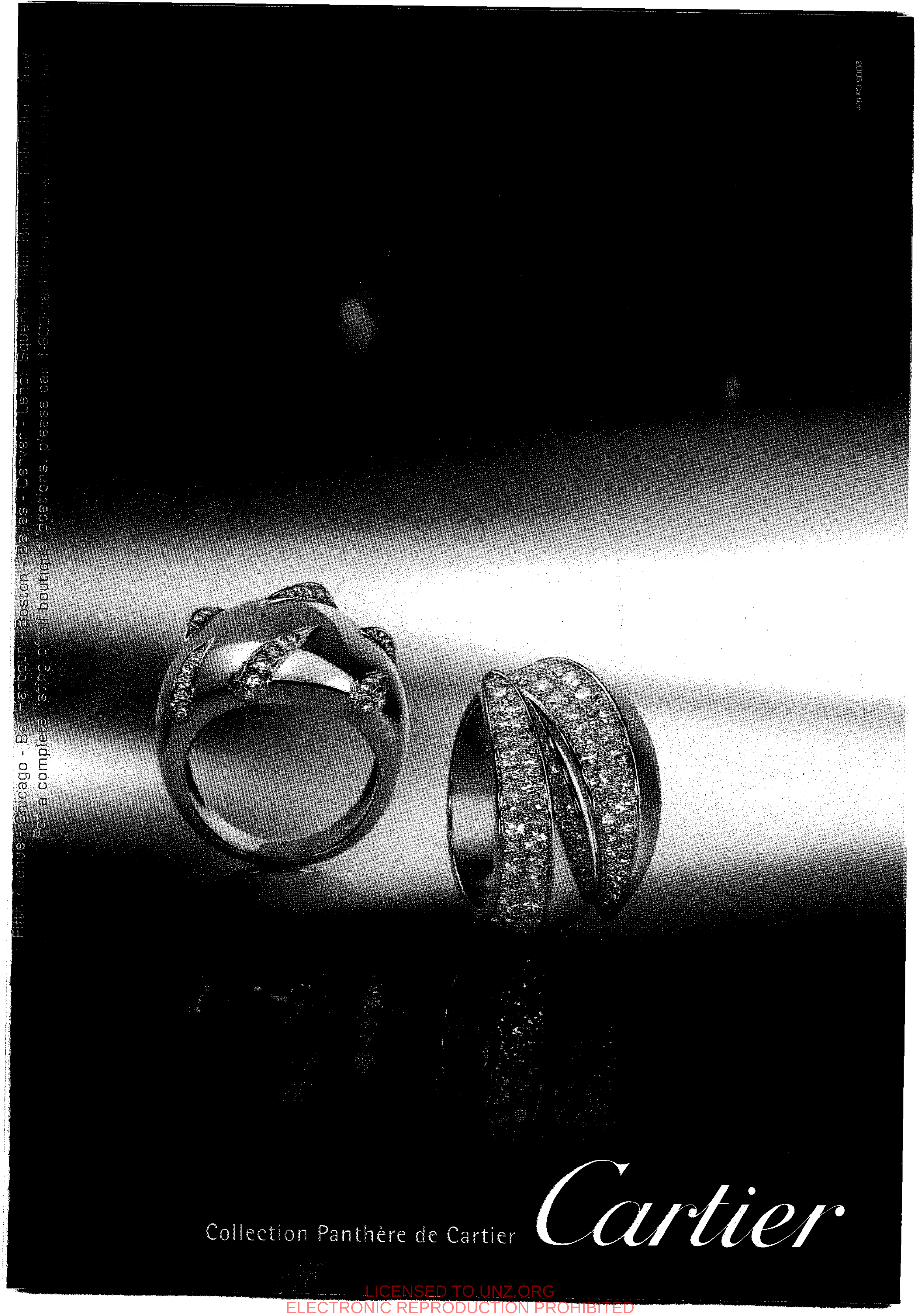
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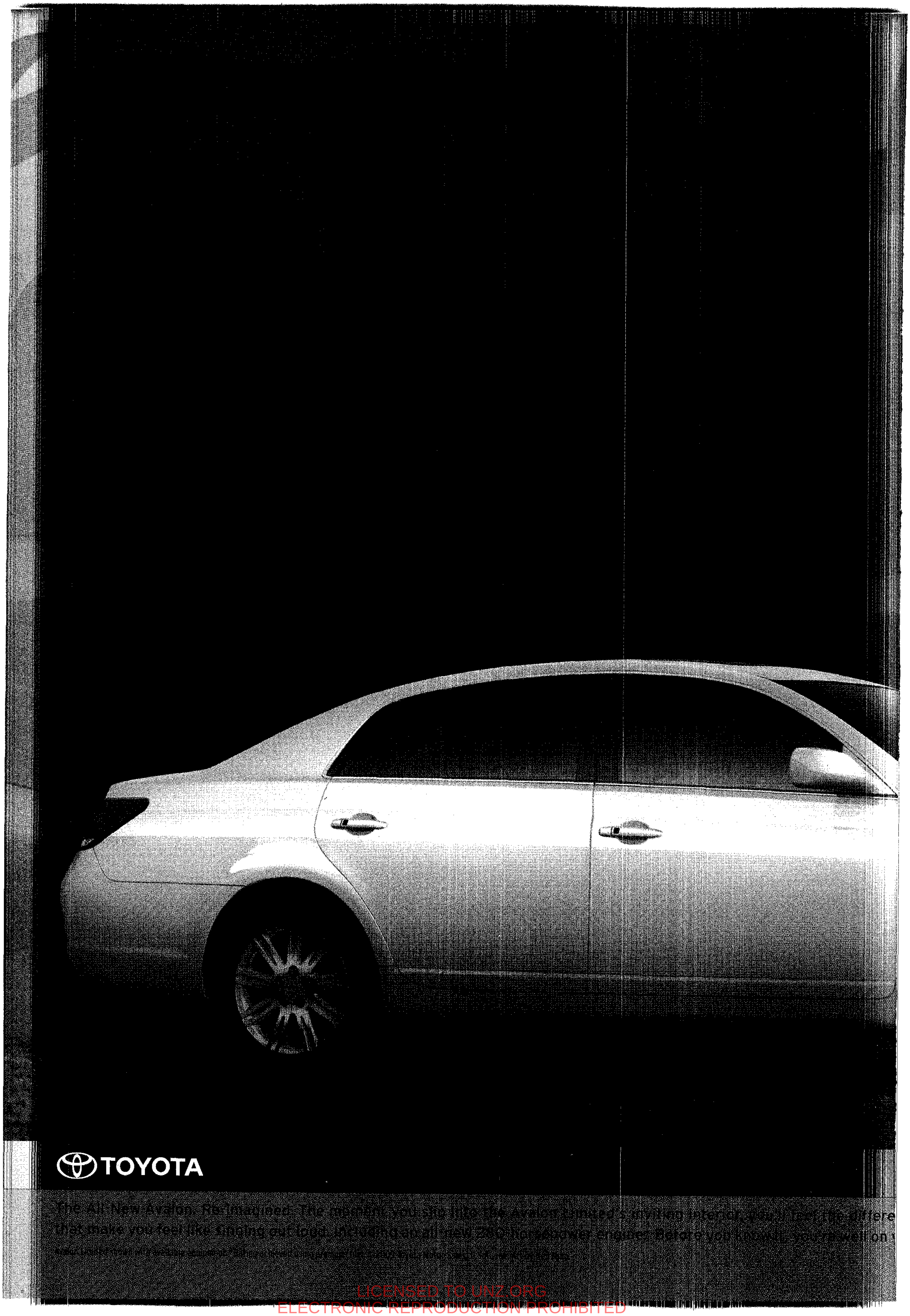

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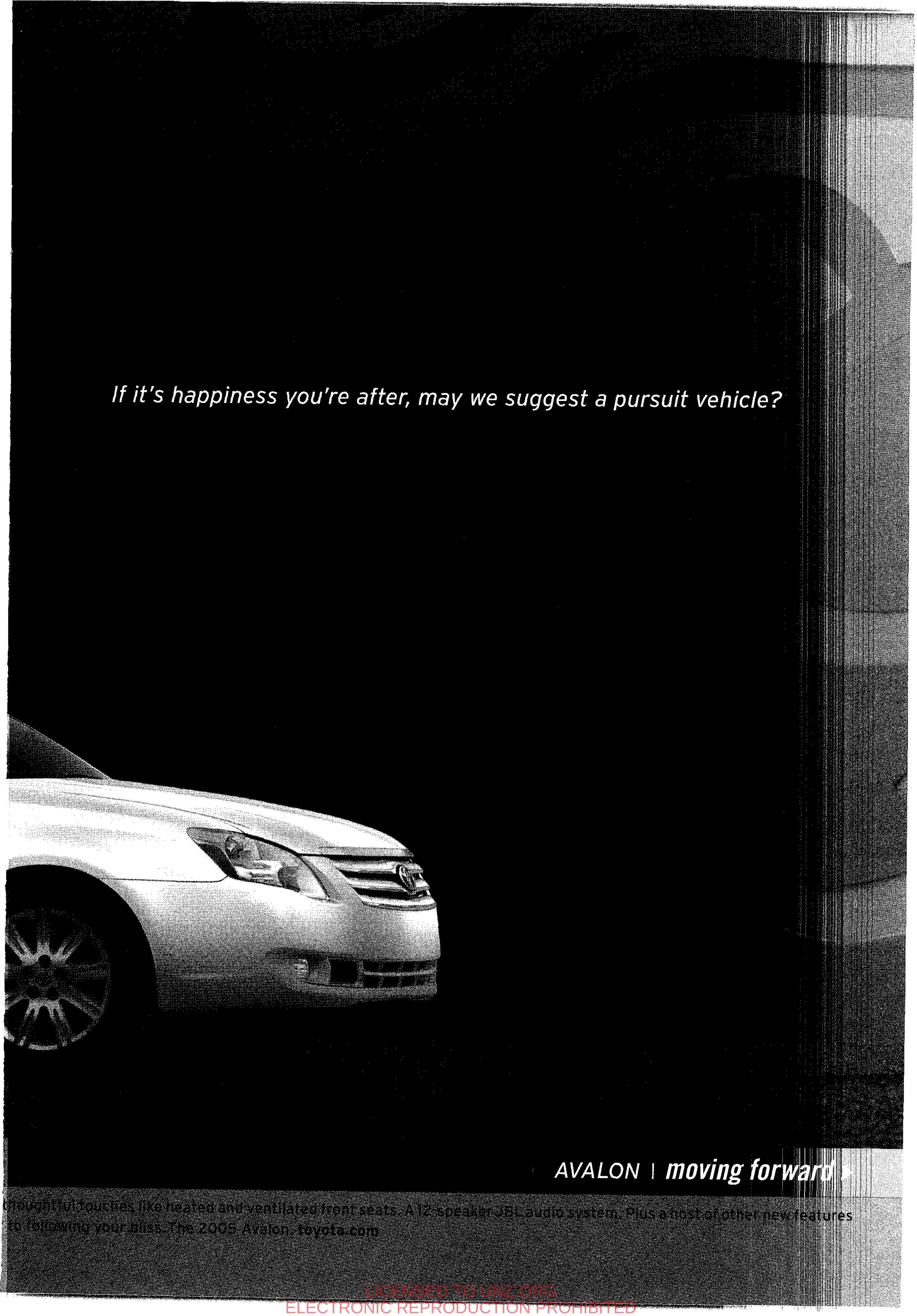
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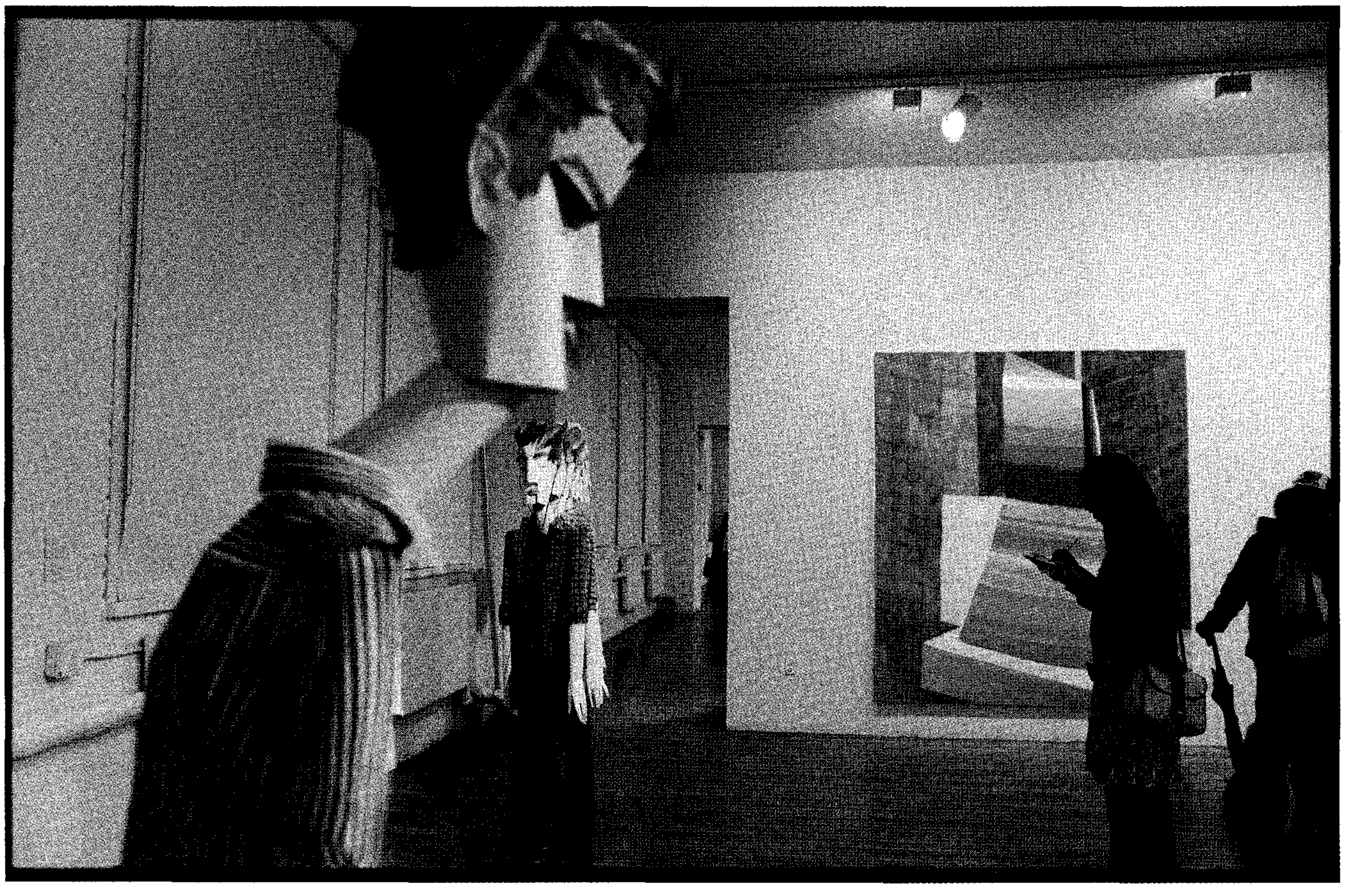

"Greater New York 2005," at P.S. 1, exhibits the work of emerging local artists. Photograph by Sylvia Plachy.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THIS WEEK

THE THEATRE
"THE PARIS LETTER"

In the New York première of a play by Jon Robin Baitz, the actor Ron Rifkin—a frequent collaborator of the playwright's—stars as Sandy Sonnenberg, a Wall Street power broker with a troubled past. The cast also includes John Glover and Michele Pawk. (See page 18.)

NIGHT LIFE
WEEZER

Rivers Cuomo's nerd-rock ensemble returns with its fifth album, "Make Believe," on which the group continues its quest to fuse the sensibilities of the Beach Boys, Kiss, and "The Catcher in the Rye." They'll play material from the record, as well as old hits, during a two-night stand at Roseland. (May 11-12; see page 20.)

ART
L.A. ART

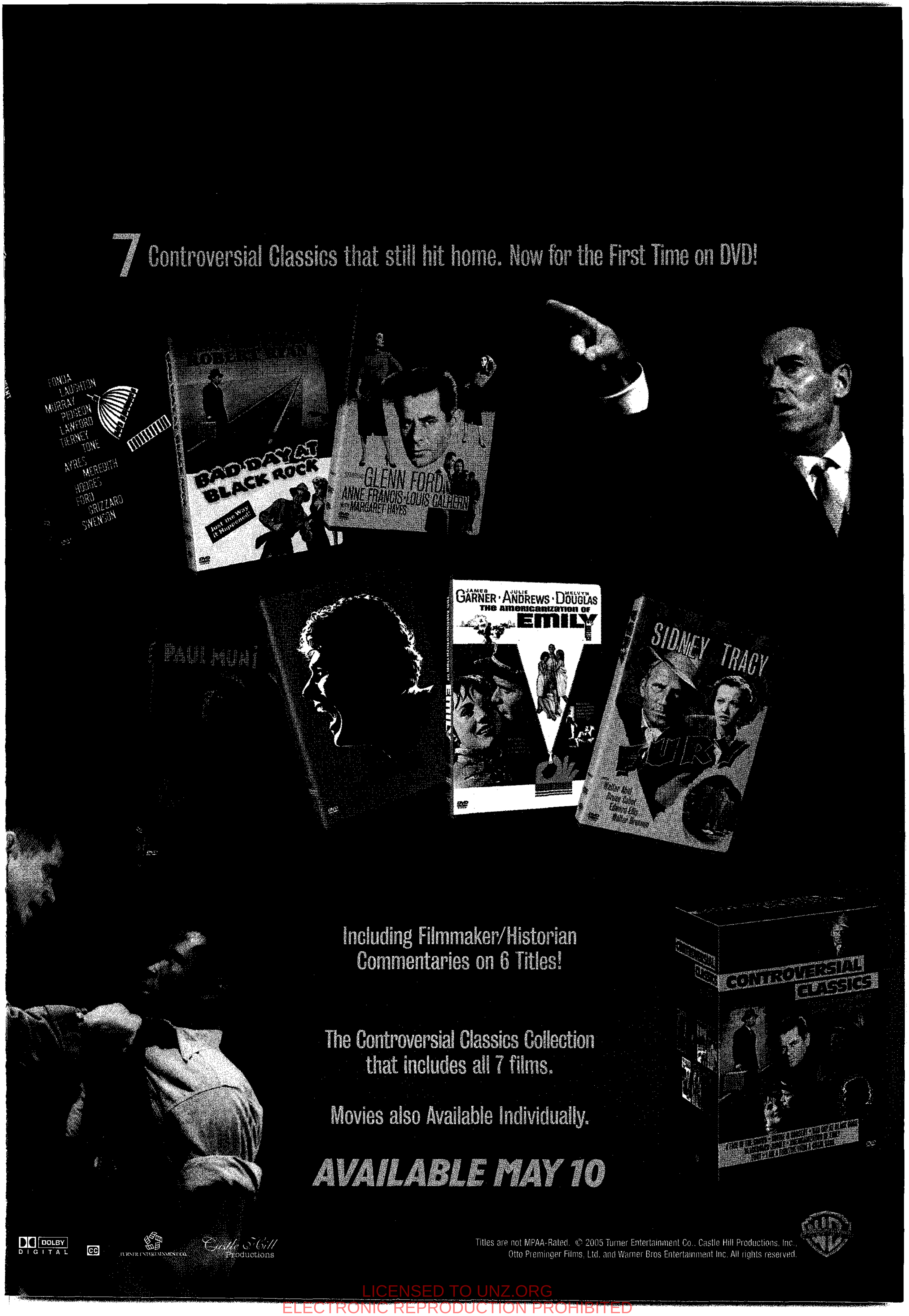
"L.A.," the group show now at Schoormans, collects the work of almost fifty artists, including the sculptors Tim Hawkinson, George Stoll, and Shirley Tse and the painters Tam Van Tran, Sharon Ellis, and Christoph Schmidberger. The show runs through May 27 and gives East Coast art fans a chance to get in touch with the West Coast scene. (See page 24.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC
AMATO OPERA

Tony Amato and his late wife, Sally, founded their small Lower East Side opera company in 1948. The company and the indefatigable Amato are still going strong—this week marks the first performances of the final opera of the season, an Amato-directed production of Donizetti's "L'Elisir d'Amore." (See page 26.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND
"THE MUSTER"

Governors Island was a Revolutionary War battle site and then, much later, the birthplace of the comedians Tommy and Dick Smothers (their father, Major Thomas Boyln Smothers, was stationed there). On May 14 it hosts "The Muster," a public art installation with a creative take on historical reënactment, organized by the artist Allison Smith. (See page 32.)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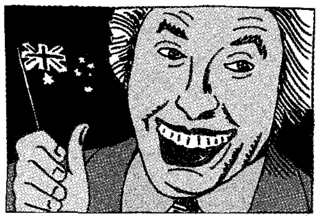
CONVERSATION
TALKING TO SIR LES

Sir Les Patterson, Australia's cultural attaché and the other, Aristophanic alter ego of the actor Barry Humphries (he is best known as Dame Edna), was at the dry cleaner's the week that he appeared, for one night only, at the Zipper Theatre. "I want to be squeaky clean for the American public," Sir Les said. "The problem between our two great countries is frankly quite simple: you were founded by Puritans, and we were founded by fuckin' convicts." Sir Les was on book tour—his best-seller "A Traveler's Tool" will soon be repackaged for American readers as "The Enlarged and Extended Tool"—but he was also on an urgent ambassadorial mission. "I've been sent over to assert Australian masculinity," he said. "It is being impugned by 'The Boy from Oz,' which represents an Australian singer as a card-carrying pillow biter. And ugly rumors have circulated that Dame Edna may not be what she seems—some people have said she might be a man. I've been asked by the Prime Minister to squire her around the city and have relations with her in public if necessary." However, Sir Les put to rest any rumors of romantic entanglement. "I wouldn't touch her with a barge pole," he said. "And I've got a barge pole."

—John Lahr



THE THEATRE
OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

AFTER THE NIGHT AND THE MUSIC
A new work by Elaine May, about life in this millennium, stars Jeanne Berlin and J. Smith-Cameron. Directed by Daniel Sullivan. In previews. (Biltmore, 261 W. 47th St. 212-239-6200.)

THE APPLE TREE
Encores! at City Center closes its season with a concert production of the musical by Jerry Bock, Sheldon Harnick, and Jerome Coopersmith, starring Kristen Chenoweth, Malcolm Gets, and Michael Cerveris. Directed by Gary Griffin. May 12-16. (131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212.)

BOOZY
The irony artists Les Frères Corbusier bring their century-hopping, high-concept play about urban planning to 45 Bleecker Theatre. Opens May 11 at 8. (45 Bleecker St. 212-307-4100.)

FLIGHT
The eventful and controversial life of Charles Lindbergh is the subject of a new play by Garth Wingfield, presented by the Melting Pot Theatre Company. In previews. Opens May 16 at 7. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 212-279-4200.)

MEMORY HOUSE
Dianne Wiest stars in a new play by Kathleen Tolan, about a woman whose college-bound adopted daughter confronts her about the ethics of international adoption. David Esbjornson directs. In previews. Opens May 17 at 7. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

MISS JULIE
A new adaptation of the Strindberg play, by Craig Lucas ("The Light in the Piazza," "Reckless"), is based on a translation by Anders Cato, who directs. With Marin Hinkle, Reg Rogers, and Julia Gibson. Previews begin May 12. (Rattlestick, 224 Waverly Pl. 212-868-4444.)

THE PARIS LETTER
A Wall Street macher is dogged by secrets from his past in the New York première of a play by Jon Robin Baitz, presented by the Roundabout Theatre Company. John Glover, Michele Pawk, and Ron Rifkin lead the cast. Directed by Doug Hughes. Previews begin May 13. (Laura Pels, 111 W. 46th St. 212-719-1300.)

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER
Oliver Goldsmith's comedy about an arranged marriage is revived by the Irish Repertory Theatre. Directed by Charlotte Moore. One preview on May 11. Opens May 12 at 8. (132 W. 22nd St. 212-727-2737.)

NOW PLAYING

ALTAR BOYZ
In this lampoon of the boy-band phenomenon, the lyricist-songwriters Gary Adler and Michael Patrick Walker hit below the belt without being vulgar in MTV-ready songs with infectious beats and witty lyrics. The spoofy synchronized break dancing, choreographed by Christopher Gattelli, would be funny even without the merciless score. (Dodger Stages, 340 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200.)

BRITS OFF BROADWAY
The series of new British theatrical imports continues. Up now: "Sisters, Such Devoted Sisters," written and performed by Russell Barr, a one-person show about a Glasgow transvestite; and "The People Next Door," a comedy by Henry Adam, also set in Glasgow, about post-9/11 paranoia. The play has a loose-jointed humor, as if the cast were making up their dialogue as they go. Nigel (Ronny Jhutti), a jittery stoner, is hunted down in his dilapidated flat by a menacing cop (Mark McDonnell), who wants to use him to spy on the local Muslim population. The play has a good deal of shaggy charm, although the script could have used a trim. (59E59 Theatre, 59 E. 59th St. 212-279-4200.)

CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG
The star of this show is the car herself, who bears her human cargo out of the reach of scary villains (and over the heads of the audience) via pop-out rafts, unfurling wings, and helicopter propellers. Yes, this is chiefly a children's show, but its quick pacing, catchy songs, and high-gloss sets (by Anthony Ward) will appeal to adults with a theatrical sweet tooth. Among the perks: standout performances by Marc Kudisch and Jan Maxwell as the lusty, child-hating Baron and Baroness Bomburst of Vulgaria. (Hilton, 213 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100.)

GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS
Joe Mantello directs a pitch-perfect revival of David Mamet's majestic play about a group of Chicago real-estate brokers who fight to get the leads, get ahead of each other, close the sale, and get on the board. It's a sort of three-card monte of verbal manipulation, in which words are decoys of self-interest that connect the speakers to nothing but their own craven desire. From the first beat of this production, the play swings; the virtuoso cast—Alan Alda, Liev Schreiber, Gordon Clapp, Jeffrey Tambor, Frederick Weller, Tom Wopat, Jordan Lage—sends it solid. Mamet's language plays like jazz: riffs of contrapuntal sound create a force field of hilarity, sorrow, and fury. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/9/05.) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.)

THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA
This lovely and complicated musical by Craig Lucas (book) and Adam Guettel (music and lyrics) is based on Elizabeth Spencer's novella about a Southern lady who takes Clara, her beautiful but intellectually impaired daughter, to Florence, where she stumbles into a love affair. Clara is played by the clear-voiced Kelli O'Hara with just the right mix of guilelessness and passion; Victoria Clark, a genteel powerhouse, plays her mother, who struggles with her conscience as her daughter fights for her right to love. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 212-239-6200.)

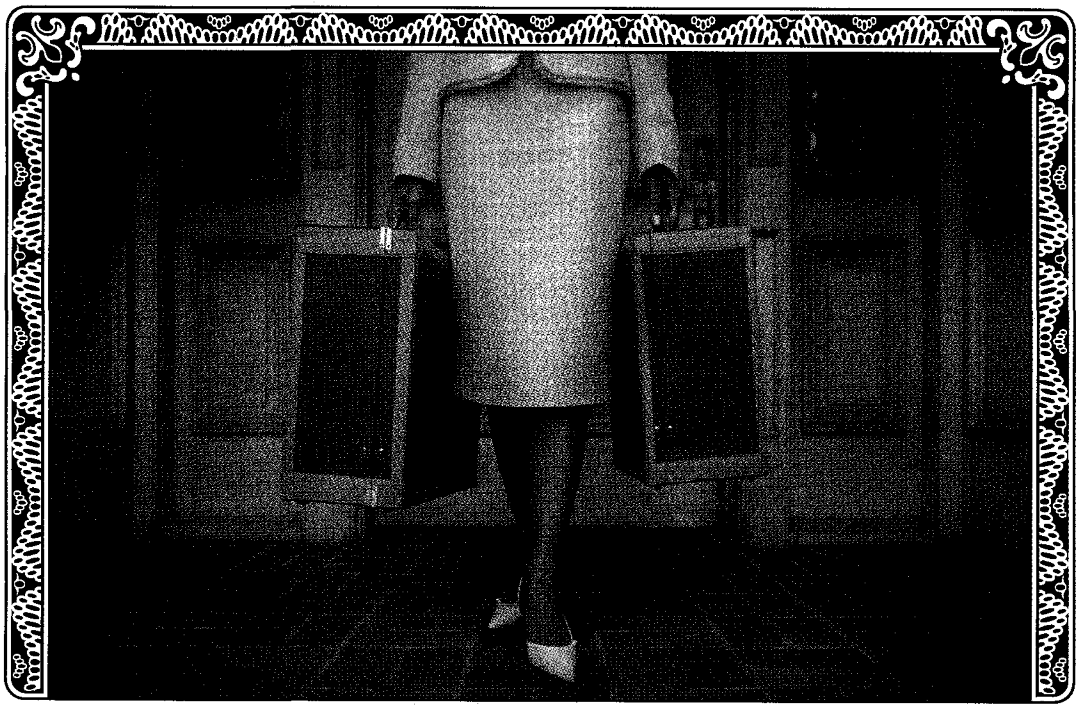
THE PASSION OF THE CRAWFORD
Lypsinka (a.k.a. John Epperson) channels the screen icon Joan Crawford and interprets two of Crawford's favorite works: "Desiderata" and a text on child-rearing. (Zipper, 336 W. 37th St. 212-239-6200. Through May 14.)

PRIVILEGE
An excellent new play by Paul Weitz ("Roulette"), set in the early-eighties era of junk bonds and Madonna's material world, tells the story of two adolescent brothers whose father is indicted for insider trading. Both boys have the mingled blitheness and jadedness of Upper East Side private-school kids, but Weitz gradually reveals their vulnerability and the strength of their bond. The remarkable Conor Donovan anchors the production, as the serious-minded little brother, Charlie, whose stubborn ideas of honor come from the books and myths of his tony upbringing. At twelve, he is already trying to be manly and contain his emotions; his brow furrows as he wrestles with his father's shame. His older brother, Porter (Harry Zittel), sixteen, awkward, girl crazy, and goofy, seems unfazed but is more observant than he lets on; the decency the boys show each other is moving. Bob Saget is very good as their out-of-touch dad, whom the scandal seems to have woken from a long and selfish dream of wealth. Directed by Peter Askin. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 212-246-4422.)

SCORE
In her latest, brilliantly staged SITI Company concoction, Anne Bogart explores the creative act by way of Leonard Bernstein, whom she paints as the ultimate razzle-dazzler. Tom Nelis's Bernstein is deeply schmaltzy—he exclaims "Life is juicy!" more than once and seems to mean it. But if the maestro's endless capacity for self-celebration is shrewdly played, it can also be exhausting and dramatically static. Jocelyn Clarke's script is an adaptation of Bernstein's own rhapsodic musings. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 212-239-6200.)

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE
In this revival of Tennessee Williams's masterpiece, the British director Edward Hall has cast Stanley against type, as a lumpen lout, in order to shed the iconic aura of Marlon Brando. "Be comfortable. That's my motto," the expert John C. Reilly, as Stanley, says to Blanche (Natasha Richardson) at

SEYMOUR CHWAST



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their first meeting. The problem is that Reilly, who has a pushed-in face and a strapping, soft body, is not particularly comfortable in his own flesh. In changing the essential nature of the character, Hall lowers the stakes and throws the play weirdly off-kilter. Meanwhile, at Blanche's core (and Williams's) is the hysteric's exhaustion at maintaining the masquerade of normality. Richardson, with her lustrous skin, her mane of long blond hair, and her buff, energetic body, has nothing remotely exhausted about her. The fact that she succeeds in making us believe in Blanche's fragility is a testament to her intelligence and to her technique. (5/9/05) (Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 212-719-1300.)

SUMMERWORKS 2005
The Clubbed Thumb theatre company's annual festival of new plays has started off with Ethan Lipton's "100 Aspects of the Moon," inspired by the wood-block prints of the Japanese artist Yoshitoshi, which runs through May 14. Next up is "Madame Killer," a gothic noir by Honour Kane, starting May 15. (Ohio, 66 Wooster St. 212-868-4444. Through May 28.)

SWEET CHARITY
A revival of the musical from 1966 about a good-natured prostitute stars Christina Applegate. Directed by Walter Bobbie, with swinging-sixties choreography by Wayne Cilento and sets by Scott Pask. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Al Hirschfeld, 302 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.)

THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE
William Finn and Rachel Sheinkin's satisfying and silly musical comedy has moved to Broadway. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 212-239-6200.)

Also Playing

ALL SHOOK UP: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 212-307-4100. **ALL WEAR BOWLERS:** HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 212-868-4444. **AVENUE Q:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **BEAST ON THE MOON:** Century Center for the Performing Arts, 111 E. 15th St. 212-239-6200. **DESSA ROSE:** Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 212-239-6200. **DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **DOUBT:** Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200. **FIDDLER ON THE ROOF:** Minskoff, 200 W. 45th St. 212-307-4100. **THE GLASS MENAGERIE:** Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **HURLYBURLY:** 37 Arts, 450 W. 37th St. 212-307-4100. **JULIUS CAESAR:** Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200. **LAZER VAUDEVILLE:** John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200. (Closes May 14.) **MAMMA MIA!:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 212-563-5544. **MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200. **NINE PARTS OF DESIRE:** Manhattan Ensemble Theatre, 55 Mercer St. 212-239-6200. **ON GOLDEN POND:** Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200. **ORSON'S SHADOW:** Barrow Street Theatre, 27 Barrow St. 212-239-6200. **A PICASSO:** City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212. **THE PILLOWMAN:** Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **THOM PAIN (BASED ON NOTHING):** DR2, 103 E. 15th St. 212-239-6200. **TWELVE ANGRY MEN:** American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 212-719-1300. **WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?:** Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200. **WICKED:** Gershwin, 222 W. 51st St. 212-307-4100. **WOMAN BEFORE A GLASS:** Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 212-239-6200.

NIGHT LIFE
ROCK AND POP

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—May 11: The Godfather of Soul, **James Brown.** May 12: **Angélique Kidjo,** one of African pop's fieriest performers. May 14: The Irish punk of the **Saw Doctors.**

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111)—May 11: **Stereo Total** is Brezel Göring and Françoise Cactus, a couple from Berlin who are caught up in a long-running affair with the pop sounds of the past. Like all affairs it's a complicated business, full of clever (electronic) manipulation: their songs turn punk, hip-hop, disco, chamber pop, and anything else you can think of into wholly original, shamefully indulgent pleasures. May 13: **Donna the Buffalo,** a winning ensemble from Ithaca, New York, seasons its country sound with a pinch of accordion and a touch of reggae. May 14-15: **British Sea Power,** a young group from Brighton with a taste for literate rock. May 16-17: **Kasabian's** screaming guitars and danceable beats have earned the British band instant Stateside popularity.

HAMMERSTEIN BALLROOM
Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. (212-307-7171)—May 15-16: Trent Reznor, the man who turned the industrial rock pioneered by Throbbing Gristle and Einstürzende Neubauten into a user-friendly (and chart-friendly) product during the nineties, brings **Nine Inch Nails** back with a new studio album, "With Teeth."

Stereo Total, at the Bowery Ballroom.

IRVING PLAZA
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (212-777-6800)—May 11-13: Over the past dozen years, the indie-rock band **Built to Spill** has garnered a sizable cult following for its long instrumental passages, wry lyrics, and unpredictable song structures. Led by the guitarist, songwriter, and vocalist Doug Martsch, the Idaho-bred trio will be playing tunes from an upcoming fall album, as well as some early favorites. May 16: The locals in the **Bravery** serve up danceable modern rock. May 17-18: England's **Gang of Four,** as renowned for its lefty politics as it was for its skewed funk, was perhaps the premier band of the post-punk movement of the late seventies. The Gang's danceable agitprop was spiked with Andy Gill's dissonant, staccato guitar attack, whose style led rock critics to start abusing the adjective "angular." Their sound is back in vogue: it has been co-opted by droves of bands (most notably Franz Ferdinand and the opener here, **Radio Four**). The original members, who haven't played together in more than two decades, have reunited to teach the youngsters how it's done.

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—May 17: The **Sharp Things,** a sprawling local ensemble led by the pianist Perry Serpa that specializes in lush, retro-flavored, sentimental pop, packs the stage in celebration of its new album, "Foxes & Hounds."

JONES BEACH
Wantagh, New York (212-307-7171)—May 14: **Velvet Revolver,** a band that has become a refuge for fallen rock-and-roll royalty, has both a coveted pedigree and a promise that it looks like it will never fulfill.

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (212-219-3055)—Two extra-urban hip-hop crews mix it up on May 12. The all-girl rap trio **Northern State** (a.k.a. Hesta Prynn, Sprout, and Spero) hails from Long Island, and its members lyricize about body image, the Lower East Side, and A.T.M.s over retro beats and rocking instrumentals. With the upstate band **Gym Class Heroes.**

NORTHSIX
66 N. 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-599-5103)—May 12: When you think of four young lads from Liverpool, you tend to think of the Beatles. But the **Dead 60's** play a spiky brand of ska-inflected rock that recalls the Clash and the Specials. May 21-22: The San Francisco foursome **Deerhoof.**

RODEO BAR
375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (212-683-6500)—May 14: The guitarist, vocalist, and multi-instrumentalist **James (Jimbo) Mathus** once lived in North Carolina and led the neo-swing group the Squirrel Nut Zippers. But in 1997 he recorded "Play Songs for Rosetta," a benefit for Rosetta Patton, who was his nanny when he was a kid and who happens to be the daughter of the blues great Charlie Patton. Since then he's moved to Mississippi, backed Buddy Guy, performed with the North Mississippi Allstars, and cut three albums of moonshine-fuelled electrified Delta blues, the latest of which is "Knockdown South."

ROSELAND
239 W. 52nd St. (212-307-7171)—May 11-12: **Weezer,** the unlikeliest of success stories, started off in the mid-nineties as just another post-Nirvana, guitar-based alternative pop band with a knack for hook-laden singles and clever videos. Following their somewhat low-profile second album, "Pinkerton," the band accrued an unexpected amount of underground credibility, thanks largely to the geekiness of their front man, Rivers Cuomo.

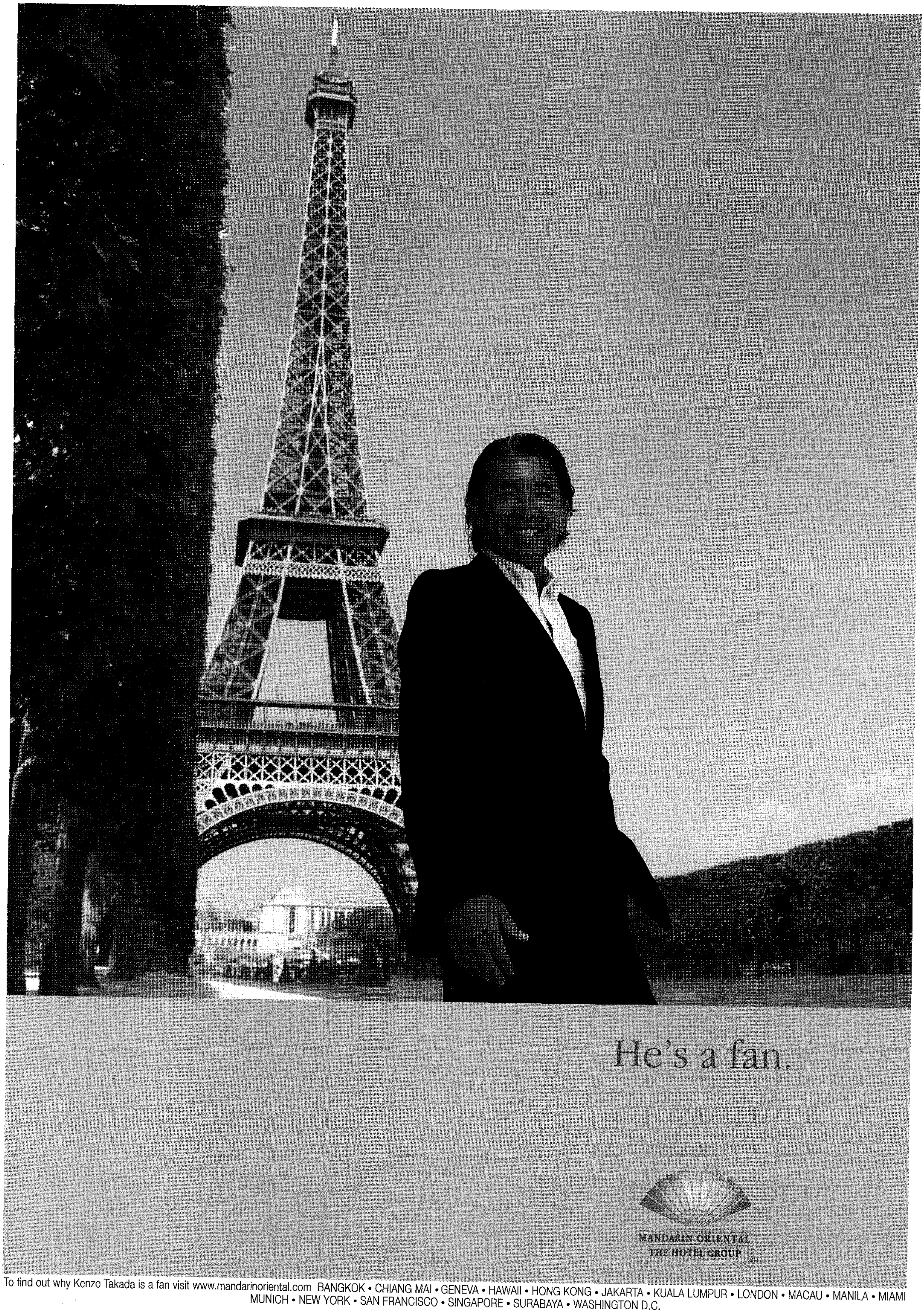
RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART
150 W. 17th St. (212-620-5000, ext. 344)—May 13: The singer-songwriter **Rosanne Cash** gives her final all-acoustic show of the spring season, backed by her ad-hoc band, Mojo Mancini. These concerts, which incorporate the museum's Himalayan art, always have a theme, and this evening, a Friday the 13th, the theme is numbers, both lucky and unlucky.

SATALLA
37 W. 26th St. (212-576-1155)—May 13: The Boricua roots band **Yerbabuena** puts a contemporary spin on traditional Puerto Rican music. Led by the vocalist Tato Torres, the New York-based ensemble employs an eclectic instrumentation, including drums, bass, and the guitarlike *cuatro* (Puerto Rico's national instrument), in its exuberant exploration of everything from folksy *plena* to the more percussive *bomba.* May 14: The Ugandan expatriate **Samite,** a master of the kalimba, the marimba, and the seven-stringed Kenyan instrument known as the *litungu,* performs quietly haunting songs in his native Lugandan. His most recent album, "Tunula Eno," is a tribute to his late wife, Joan, and was recorded during the last year of her life.

TOWN HALL
123 W. 43rd St. (212-840-2824)—May 14: The World Music Institute presents **Taraf de Haïdouks,** the fantastically exuberant Gypsy combo whose name can be interpreted as either "Band of Brigands" or, more kindly, the "Generous Outlaws Orchestra." (For more information, call 212-545-7536.)

WEBSTER HALL
125 E. 11th St. (212-353-1600)—A healthy disdain for authority and a herculean appetite for misbehav-

TOMER HANUKA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ior coalesce as the local hardcore legends **Murphy's Law,** the crazed rockabilly maverick **Reverend Horton Heat,** and the gleefully sloppy garage punks the **Supersuckers** meet on May 11.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (212-475-8592)—May 10-15: The mighty pianist **McCoy Tyner** has employed the piano trio as his primary forum for aeons, but here he spices it up with the trumpeter **Terell Stafford** and the saxophonists **Gary Bartz** and **Ravi Coltrane,** the son of Tyner's legendary boss.

CARLYLE HOTEL
Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound murals, and, through May 27, **Barbara Cook.** Her longtime accompanist, Wally Harper, died last October, but the doyenne of cabaret has persevered with a new pianist and bassist. Her show "Tributes" celebrates the legacies of Bobby Short, Harold Arlen, and Harper, whose obscure originals gain lustre in Cook's warming embrace.

FEINSTEIN'S AT THE REGENCY
540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (212-339-4095)—May 10-21: **Debby Boone** makes her night-club début. Forget "You Light Up My Life." On "Reflections of Rosemary," Boone's new tribute to her late mother-in-law, Rosemary Clooney, she comes off as a confident and swinging stylist. Live, she gets piano support from **John Oddo,** Clooney's musical director, completing the family circle.

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121)—May 11-15: **Bireli Lagrene** and his Gypsy Band pay tribute to Django Reinhardt. Lagrene, who has idolized Reinhardt since he was old enough to hold a six-string, captures Django's passion and virtuosity unlike anyone else. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.** The **Mingus Big Band** takes over on Tuesdays.

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—The drummer **Jack DeJohnette** recently formed a new independent label, Golden Beams Productions, and he celebrates its launch on May 13. One of its first releases is "Music from the Hearts of the Masters," a collaboration with the master kora player **Foday Musa Suso,** who will join him here, along with the guitarist-bassist **Jerome Harris** and the percussionist **Don Alias.** The **Mingus Orchestra** is here Thursdays, with sets at 11:30 and 1:30 A.M.

METROPOLITAN CAFÉ
959 First Ave., at 53rd St. (212-759-5600)—May 10 and May 17: The drummer **Chris Parker's** band Toph-e and the Pussycats, which includes the bassist **Will Lee,** the percussionist **Ralph McDonald,** the keyboardist **Clifford Carter,** and the saxophonist **David Mann,** jams on favorites by the likes of Duke Ellington, Ivan Lins, Don Grolnick, and their old friend the late keyboardist Richard Tee.

TRIBECA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
199 Chambers St. (212-220-1460)—May 12: The pianist **Dick Hyman** gathers some staunch defenders of pre-bop jazz—including **Vince Giordano** and his Nighthawks, the trumpeters **Marcus Belgrave** and **Randy Sandke,** and the young cabaret singer **Peter Cincotti**—for a tribute to the trumpeter Doc Cheatham.

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—May 10-15: The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra,** a superbly calibrated ensemble that is usually here only on Monday nights, settles in for a weeklong tribute to its founders, Thad Jones and Mel Lewis.

ZANKEL HALL
Carnegie Hall, 57th St. at Seventh Ave. (212-247-7800)—The classical singer **Renée Fleming** and the jazz pianist **Brad Mehldau** share a passion for each other's genres. On May 15 they première two new extended works by Mehldau adapted from the poetry of Louise Bogan and Rainer Maria Rilke.

ART
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-879-5500)—This year, the Costume Institute's annual blockbuster is **"Chanel,"** a retrospective of designs from the couture house founded by Gabrielle Chanel (1883-1971), better known as Coco. A warren of white cubicles, set against black floors, ceilings, and walls, keeps the focus tight on mannequins in flowing sportswear, tweed suits, and, of course, fabulous dresses: gypsy dresses, flapper dresses, ball gowns, and little black dresses (a genre Chanel invented in the early nineteen-twenties). It's surprising how restricted her palette was; she mostly stuck to black, beige, and occasional flashes of the color dubbed "Chanel red," accented with her signature white camellias. The clothes assume a fascinating woman will be wearing them, and work around her with minimal distraction. Luxury and discretion predominate, though the latter fades in some more recent Karl Lagerfeld designs, which are rife with oversized interlocking "C"s and gold chains. But the exhibition's true focus is charming, iconoclastic Coco, who never lost her touch; a cotton suit lined in quilted rabbit fur, from 1970, retains the effortless chic that made the house famous. Through Aug. 7. ♦ **"John Townsend: Newport Cabinetmaker"** presents forty-five pieces by one of Colonial America's more prominent furniture-makers alongside additional work by his contemporaries. Through Sept. 25. ♦ **"Sol LeWitt on the Roof: Splotches, Whirls, and Twirls."** A summer installation in the roof garden of five spiky stalagmite sculptures and a wall drawing. Rather than relying on linear geometry—as he does in his modular sculptures—these works are generated by free-form drawings fed into a computer and translated into three dimensions. Like the work of the minimalists with whom LeWitt is generally linked, the "splotches" rely on systems, their contours and peak heights dictating the bold coloration. The wall drawing is a twisting roller coaster of color, but it's less surprising than the sculptures, which recall the manically fake mountains of amusement parks and casino displays, or a piece of brightly colored playground equipment. Through Oct. 30. ♦ **"Max Ernst: A Retrospective."** Some hundred and eighty paintings, drawings, sculptures, collages, and illustrated books by the restlessly creative artist (1891-1976). Through July 10. ♦ **"Diane Arbus: Revelations,"** an indeed revealing (though gratingly worshipful) retrospective, confirms Arbus's achievement as a revolutionary photographer. Through May 30. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9400)—Chris Marker's **"Owls at Noon Prelude: The Hollow Men,"** a nineteen-minute looped video installation invoking T. S. Eliot and the First World War, is on display in the Morita media gallery. Through June 13. ♦ **"The High Line"** details Field Operations and Diller Scofidio & Renfro's ambitious urban rails-to-trails scheme for the abandoned elevated tracks that run along the West Side from Gansevoort to Thirty-fourth Street. Through July 18. ♦ **"Thomas Demand."** The German artist's crisp photographs of cut-and-glued, life-size mockups of unpeopled environments suggest that, like photographs, our assumptions about reality are paper thin. Through May 30. ♦ **"Groundswell: Constructing the Contemporary Landscape"** surveys the newest waves in landscape design with elaborate architectural models, virtual tours, video, and photographs. Through May 16. (Open Wednesdays through Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30, and Friday evenings until 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—**"The Eye of the Storm: Works in Situ by Daniel Buren"** includes a mirror-clad construction that fills the museum's spiralling atrium. Through June 8. ♦ Rirkrit Tiravanija's **"Untitled 2005 (The Air Between the Chain-Link Fence and the Broken Bicycle Wheel)"** takes viewers' experience of television from passive to active with an engaging demonstration of how to build a low-power TV station. Through May 11. ♦ **"Recent Acquisitions: Slater Bradley's 'Doppelganger Trilogy'"** gathers three of the artist's recent videos, for which he staged utterly convincing faux performances by Kurt Cobain, Michael Jackson, and Ian Curtis. Weirdly, thrillingly, the videos can play like lost bootlegs of fallen heroes. Through May 22. (Open Saturdays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

TABLES FOR TWO
SHAKE SHACK

Madison Square Park, at E. 23rd St. (212-889-6600)—Since reopening for a second season last month, Danny Meyer's snack stand has had nearly interminable lines, first stretching toward the temptation of a McDonald's across Twenty-third Street and, recently, with the addition of a gate, in the direction of Sol LeWitt's new installation, a kind of upside-down Stonehenge. Students from the School of Visual Arts sit cross-legged on the paths, sketching the scene. The Shack itself has corrugated sides of zinc and a sloping roof of ivy-tangled chain link, which forms a broad brim around the booth. Menu items are announced by cutout metal letters—done in Richard Neutra-inspired mid-century-modern cool—that wrap around the building. It's drive-thru America recast as Manhattan elegance.

The Shack Burgers are the small West Coast, In-N-Out kind. The single patty is too thin to stand up to the grilled potato roll, the tomato, the American cheese, and the Shack Sauce (like all secret sauces, it tastes like Russian dressing). But the doubles and triples are pure messy pleasure, with dripping juices that encourage fast eating. And although the meat has a three-star pedigree—ground fresh from sirloin and brisket at Eleven Madison Park, the nearby restaurant also owned by Meyer—the best part is biting through each seared edge of the stacked patties. The rest of the menu is satisfying: hot dogs, including the unwieldy Chicago-style, and crisp, crinkle-cut fries. One nice oddity, the Shack Stack, adds a fried portobello mushroom to the double burger, giving a crunchy counterpoint to the tender meat. And the eponymous shakes are classic—thick, without any tricks.

The crowds keep coming, through fair weather and foul; but, while the ivy overhead provides some shade on sunny days, it does nothing for those hungry chumps who hang on through the rain. That might be for the best, because the Shack needs to get rid of some fans if it's going to survive. No burger stand can handle this kind of volume. Even if you make it through the line, the wait at the pickup window can kill you. The only answer is to expand immediately—first stop, the sorrily provisioned Bryant Park. (Open daily for lunch and dinner. Dogs and burgers $2.31-$7.60.)

—*Owen Phillips*

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3676)—**"Tim Hawkinson,"** a mid-career retrospective of the California artist's diverse inventions, including the football-field-size "Überorgan," an automated bagpipe housed in the sculpture garden at 590 Madison Avenue, at Fifty-seventh Street. Through May 29. ♦ **"Ellen Gallagher: DeLuxe,"** a series of embellished images based on advertisements from mid-century African-American magazines. Through May 15. ♦ **"Prints Into Drawings,"** a roomful of prints made in the last fifty years assembled to illustrate the shared techniques of drawing and printmaking. Through Aug. 1. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, and Fridays, 1 to 9.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART
200 Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—**"Basquiat"** is an important, intensely enjoyable retrospective of the neo-expressionist, who died in 1988, at the age of twenty-seven. Through June 5. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5, and Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (212-857-0000)—This retrospective of the work of **Larry Clark** covers a lot of ground, much of it more than once. Beginning with his first book, "Tulsa," published in 1971—in which he chronicled intimately, in black-and-white, the lives of his home-town friends—Clark has focussed on kids: adolescents shooting up, fondling guns, and looking ready for a car wreck. Through June 5. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 6; Fridays, 10 to 8.)

JAPAN SOCIETY
333 E. 47th St. (212-752-3015)—**"Little Boy: The Arts of Japan's Exploding Subculture."** Through July 24. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 11 to 6, Fridays 11 to 9, and weekends, 11 to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (212-423-3200)—**"Wild Things: The Art of Maurice Sendak."** Through Aug. 14. ♦ **"The Power of Conversation: Jewish Women and Their Salons."** Through July 10. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45; Thursdays, 11 to 8; and Fridays, 11 to 3.)

MUSEO DEL BARRIO
Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (212-831-7272)—**"Mexico: The Revolution and Beyond, Photographs by Casasola 1900-1940."** Through July 31. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

P.S. 1 CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER
22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084)—**"Greater New York 2005"** collects work by more than a hundred and sixty artists from around the city who have emerged in the past five years. Through Sept. 26. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, noon to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Galleries are usually open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6; please call the gallery for exact hours.

HUBERTUS GOJOWCZYK
Gojowczyk, a retired teacher from Germany, has been interfering with books to make inventive, punning sculptures since 1968; the meticulously constructed works on view here date from 1973 to the present. Some of the books are besieged by nature, overgrown with weeds or molds or invaded by a red-clawed lobster; others have been more plainly abused by the artist, who shrouds them in wax, burns away words, and carves little amphitheatres into their pages. Poetic, Cornell-ish assemblages that speak to the life of books even as they destroy them. Through June 24. (Moeller, 167 E. 73rd St. 212-988-4500.)

EDWARD HOPPER
Twenty-two drawings, many of them rough sketches for the artist's iconic paintings. Through May 31. (Peter Findlay, 41 E. 57th St. 212-644-4433.)

SIMON NORFOLK
Like so many contemporary photojournalists, Norfolk makes images that have little to do with front-line or front-page news. The impact of his big, beautiful color photos—nearly all of them broad landscape views—is subtler and far more complicated, like history itself. An idyllic snow scene in a Bosnian forest sets a sly trap: just beyond the clearing is the site of a grave that held the remains of six hundred and twenty people; the trees marked with bright-red paint warn of land mines. Refugee camps in Beirut and Pakistan and the delicate tracery of radio wires on Ascension Island are just as seductive as they are charged. Through May 28. (Benrubi, 41 E. 57th St. 212-888-6007.)

Short List

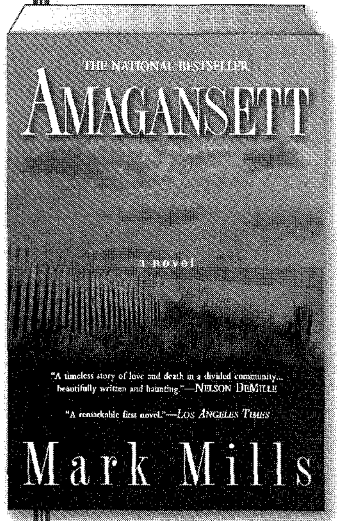
ERNST LUDWIG KIRCHNER: Werner, 4 E. 77th St. 212-988-1623. Through May 14. **JULIAN SCHNABEL:** C&M, 45 E. 78th St. 212-861-0020. Through June 4. **WAYNE THIEBAUD:** Stone, 113 E. 90th St. 212-987-4997. Through May 27. **"JUMP CUTS":** Americas Society, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. 212-249-8950. Through May 21.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

VICTOR BURGIN
The current frenzy for architecture and design is put into historical perspective with this poetic, erudite single-channel video. Spoken narrative lifted (and altered) from a 1758 French text—Jean-François de Bastide's "La Petite Maison," a hybrid architectural treatise and erotic novella in

The sensational debuts that have everyone talking.

A haunting debut of love, murder, and social class set in a divided Eastern Long Island hamlet.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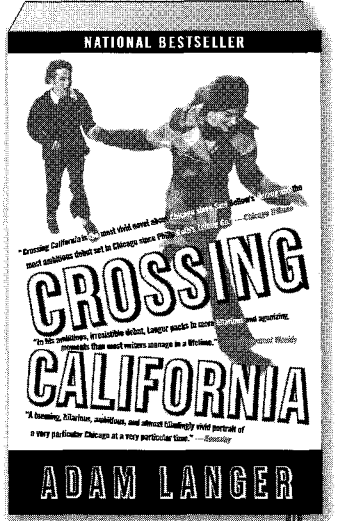
—*Los Angeles Times*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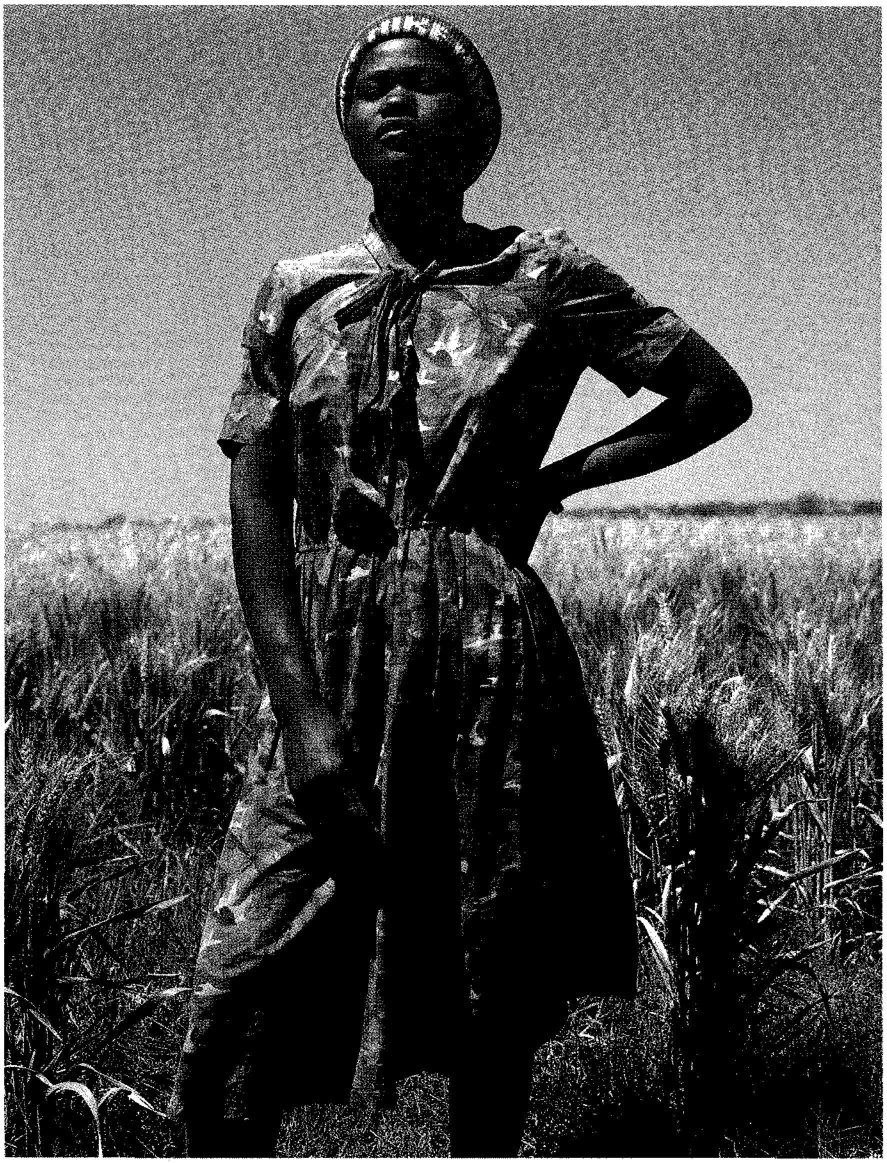


Jackie Nickerson's 1997 portrait of a Zimbabwean farm worker, at Shainman.

which a virtuous woman's resolve is weakened by elaborate gardens and impeccable home décor—is paired with images panning the modern interior of a nineteen-twenties Rudolph Schindler house in Los Angeles. Like a "Liaisons Dangereuses" for the *Wallpaper* set, Burgin's video begs the question for contemporary-design mavens: what might a Koolhaas or Gehry do for you? Through May 28. (Burgin, 243 W. 18th St. 212-462-2668.)

JIM CAMPBELL
These light boxes, built from L.E.D. panels, Plexiglas (sometimes mounted with photos), and artist-designed electronics, look a bit like out-of-focus flat-screen television sets, though the comparison doesn't do the craft behind them justice. Campbell trained in math and electrical engineering at M.I.T. and applies that technical know-how to studies of waves and ghostly city scenes. He usually sticks with black-and-white, which makes them seem melancholic, and adds further notes of glumness or poetry by toying with the speed. The images are a little underwhelming, but still intriguing, and are very impressive as constructions. Through May 14. (Wolkowitz, 601 W. 26th St. 212-243-8830.)

JASPER JOHNS
Thirty-eight paintings, drawings, and prints made since 1996, all part of the artist's "Catenary" series. Through June 25. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 212-243-0200.)

GERALD LAING
American consumerism and militarism were most memorably linked in James Rosenquist's epic "F-111" (1964-65). Here, the British painter-sculptor Laing tries his hand at a new version for the post-9/11 era. The notorious Abu Ghraib photographs serve as fodder, seen through the filter of iconic Pop style, as evinced by Lichtenstein, Warhol, and Rosenquist himself. The exclamation "Look Mickey, I've hooked a big one!!" floats over a private holding a prisoner on a leash. "Catechism" places the famous hooded figure on Brillo boxes in a composition that echoes El Greco. As political paintings go, these aren't the subtlest; the glibness of the sixties Pop idiom mixed with torture photos just doesn't reach the sublime and scary grandeur of "F-111." Through May 28. (Spike, 547 W. 20th St. 212-627-4100.)

NICOLA LÓPEZ
Like illustrations from a dystopian graphic novel, López's twisting cut-paper sculptures and layered drawings show dream cities chockablock with unhealthy mechanisms like oil derricks, nuclear plants, and power towers. Highways wind through seething construction, while fighter jets—individually cut out and affixed to the wall—stream off like flocks of birds. The paper is overlapped and slightly translucent, the palette tending toward metallic blue, beige, and black. It's a complex, overloaded, and strangely elegant world. Through May 14. (Golden, 539 W. 23rd St. 212-727-8304.)

JACKIE NICKERSON
Nickerson's recent portraits of nuns, priests, and other Irish clergy have a clammy, almost creepy specificity that's entirely absent from her earlier pictures of black plantation workers in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. In those sun-bleached photos, her solitary subjects pose in the green fields where they work, some stoic, others evincing the serene hauteur of fashion models. And no wonder: their wrapped, layered, and extravagantly tattered outfits are as inventive as any avant-garde Japanese deconstructionist's. Clearly, Nickerson is interested in more than idiosyncratic flair here, but sometimes style trumps content. Through May 21. (Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. 212-645-1701.)

RICHARD PRINCE
New and old works spanning the last twenty-five years, including joke and cartoon paintings, photographs, and sculpture. Through June 18. (Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 212-206-9300.)

FRANCES STARK
Stark's new show of sculpturally collaged works on paper, mostly white but splashed with plumage-like color, explore a vanishing pink-collar world. In the artist's own prose, her motifs include "the verging-on-reprehensibly-banal comic strip personality Cathy, some rather elegant chrysanthemums (if I don't say so myself), something akin to in-boxes, a couple of peacocks, and some soft secretaries." Exactly. Encompassing the aesthetics of both damask-covered escritoires and beige cubicles, Stark's creations ponder ideas of efficiency and organization, paper-pushing and reverie. Through May 14. (CRG, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-229-2766.)

"L.A."
Certain threads run through these works by forty-eight L.A.-based artists, from the hybrid Pop-minimalist sculptures of Jason Meadows and Shirley Tse to the Futurist-kitsch painting of Adam Ross, Tam Van Tran, and Sharon Ellis. Newcomers like the Photo-Realist Christoph Schmidberger and the abject Expressionist Brian Calvin are showcased alongside L.A. veterans like Liz Larner and Tim Hawkinson. The work's generally sunny demeanor stands in stark contrast to the gloomy, craft-spun, fairy-tale escapism endemic among young East Coast artists, and where figurative art is well represented in P.S. 1's "Greater New York," abstraction abounds here. Through May 27. (Schoormans, 508 W. 26th St. 212-243-3159.)

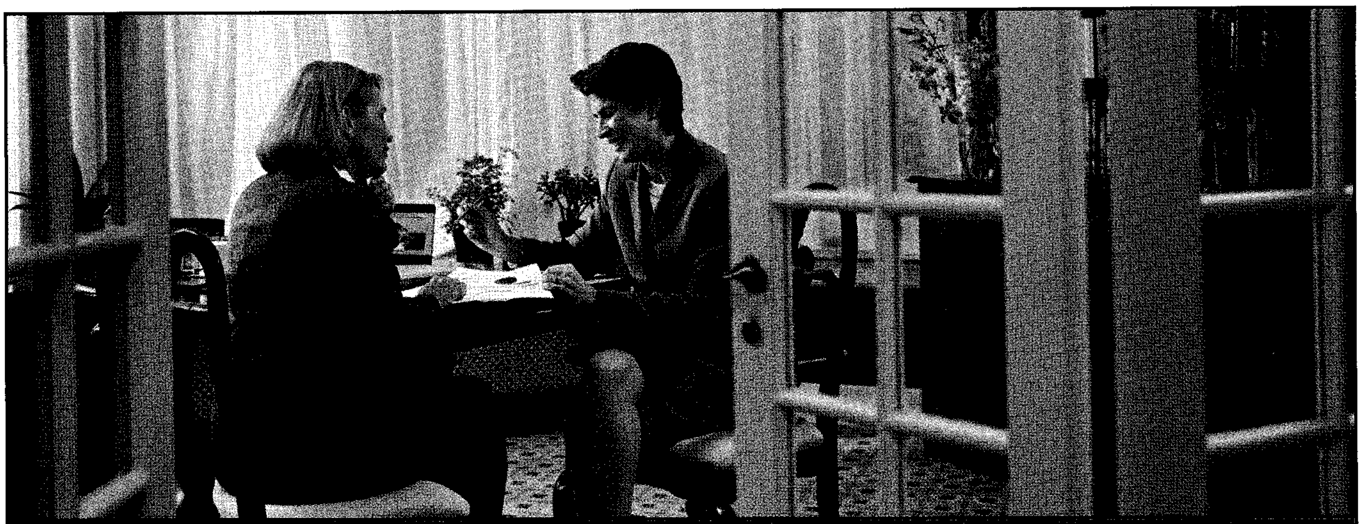
Short List

DANIEL BOZHKOV: Kreps, 516A W. 20th St. 212-741-8849. Through May 14. **JERRY DANTZIC:** Foley, 547 W. 27th St. 212-244-9081. Through May 21. **DAMIEN HIRST:** Gagosian, 555 W. 24th St. 212-741-1111. Through May 21. **GUY RICHARDS SMIT:** Roebling Hall, 606 W. 26th St. 212-929-8180. Through May 14. **AMY WILSON:** Bellwether, 134 Tenth Ave. 212-929-5959. Through May 21.

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET
The spring season continues. ♦ May 11 at 8: "Allegro Brillante," "Tarantella," "Tālā Gaisma," and "Musagète." ♦ May 12 at 8 (an all-Balanchine program): "Harlequinade" and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." ♦ May 13 at 8: "Allegro Brillante," "Double Aria," "Broken Promise," "Barber Violin Concerto," and "Glass Pieces." ♦ May 14 at 2 (an all-Balanchine program): "Allegro Brillante" and "Harlequinade." ♦ May 14 at 8: "An American in Paris," "Broken Promise," "Distant Cries," "Tarantella," and "Musagète." ♦ May 15 at 3: "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3" and "Musagète." ♦ May 17 at 7:30: "The Four Temperaments," "Polyphonia," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 212-870-5570. Through June 26.)

MOMIX
For twenty-five years, Moses Pendleton's fertile imagination has turned out Cirque du Soleil-style spectacles for sexy dancers who can stretch like rubber bands. In the first of three weeks at the Joyce in this anniversary season, the troupe reprises its 2001 hit "Opus Cactus," an ode to the desert and its creatures. Whether conjuring up a Gila monster, a patch of tumbleweed, or a sunflower, Pendleton uses light, costumes, props, and, above all, bodies, to jaw-dropping effect. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 212-242-0800. May 10-13 at 8, May 14 at 2 and 8, and May 15 at 2 and 7:30. Through May 29.)



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CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
HOOFING IT

The San Francisco quartet Deerhoof, playing at Northsix May 21-22, makes the difficult wonderful. You could say that the band is an exercise in frustration: Deerhoof tours constantly and without much fanfare; they are sometimes billed as a free-jazz act and sometimes as a rock band. Songs stop just as they've solidified into a hook, abrasive hubbub annexes a soothing patch of melody, and the abrupt cut always trumps the long, steady shot. It is a style of music that, when one is considering a night out, might look like homework next to a good Marx Brothers movie. But, live, Deerhoof's barks and hoots cohere into a giddy totality. The singer Satomi Matsuzaki, when not delivering her singsong vocals, waves at the crowd like an air-traffic controller; the guitarists Chris Cohen and John Dieterich follow each other's long, bell-like lines; and the main attraction, the bandleader and virtuosic drummer Greg Saunier, folds his six-feet-two-inch frame behind his kit, which includes a parade drum, cymbals, and a snare. Saunier puts on a show that would be right at home in the 1913 World's Fair.

—*Sasha Frere-Jones*

"NETRO"
The Israeli-born choreographer Neta Pulvermacher and her Neta Dance Company celebrate her eclectic, spirited repertory in a retrospective that covers twenty years of work, divided into two programs. Program A, in the first week, includes the 1991 duet "Matildas" and the sextet "Vivaldiana" (1999), set to Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Cellos in G Minor, in which dancers move with stately stop-action in the Adagio and rocket through the Allegros in such intricate, quick trajectories that it's a wonder they don't collide. The week's highlight is the autobiographical piece "Five Beds/Children of the Dream," which reënacts Pulvermacher's childhood on a Communist kibbutz by the Golan Heights, where she and fifteen other children were raised collectively. Dancers pound out the downbeats to the "Internationale" with their feet, dive for cover into their prison-issue cots, then spring back into action. (Flea, 41 White St. 212-352-3101. May 11-14 at 7 and May 15 at 3. Through May 22.)

"JULIUS CAESAR SUPERSTAR"
In Lawrence Goldhuber's merry sendup of political hysteria, Caesar (Robert LaFosse) is flanked by eight two-hundred-and-fifty-plus-pound senators and a quartet of prancing knights. Goldhuber mixes styles with a free hand: courtly dances, playground games, and touchdown jubilations alternate with sprightly ballet steps. Goldhuber's special guests, Arthur Aviles and Keely Garfield, add rambunctious energy to an event that feels agreeably like a school play run amok. (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bowery, Second Ave. at 10th St. May 12-15 at 8:30. 212-674-8194.)

SABA DANCE THEATRE
The costumes that the French-born choreographer Saba designs for his productions are oddly imaginative: two dancers disappear into tubelike outfits, connected at the feet, arms, and head; four women share one skirt. Saba's other efforts—singing and choreography—are less inspired. His latest work, "3," made up of fourteen wildly disparate episodes, is divided into three sections, each embodying one of the colors of the French flag. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 212-307-4100. May 13 at 8 and May 14 at 2 and 8.)

"SPRING STEPS"
For three consecutive Tuesdays, modern dancers commandeer the World Financial Center's Winter Garden in a series of free concerts. First up: the choreographer Rebecca Stenn and her company, the PerksDance-MusicTheatre, whose vaudeville-inspired "Walt's Travels" is paired with her tongue-in-cheek version of "Carmen." (220 Vesey St. 212-945-0505. May 10 at 12. Through May 24. No tickets necessary.)

"FIGURES ON A FIELD"
In his disturbing new performance piece, a collaboration with the artist Laylah Ali, Dean Moss draws on Ali's cartoonlike "Greenhead" painings. Seven black performers matter-of-factly enact enigmatic, violent scenarios—a nasty game of dodgeball, some sadomasochistic choking with a belt. Bodies pile up in a heap, seemingly wounded or lamed. A docent adds a buffer, guiding members of the audience through the performance as if they were on a museum tour. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 212-255-5793. May 12-14 at 8.)

AILEY II
The younger company of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre may be a junior-varsity troupe, but it performs like an all-star team. It now marks its thirtieth anniversary with an engagement at the Apollo, presenting the première of "How Small a Thought"—an interpretation of a Steve Reich score by the resident choreographer Troy Powell—along with more Ailey-like works by Talley Beatty, Marlies Yearby, Robert Battle, Judith Jamison, and the late founder himself. (253 W. 125th St. 212-307-7171. May 13 at 8 and May 14 at 2 and 8.)

"JOYCE SOHO PRESENTS"
The annual showcase series for emerging choreographers continues. This week's performances include the solo "It Doesn't Matter It Already Happened," in which Sunhwa Chung moves among shifting circles of light; Antonio Ramos's "Lost Before Found," a dance that melds poetry with dance; Nicole Wolcott's "Render," in which a soloist interacts with video images, and "Halfshadow," by Todd Williams, a piece that explores the emotions in dreams and nightmares. (155 Mercer St. 212-334-7479. May 12-14 at 8. Through May 21.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC
OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA
May 11 at 8 and May 14 at 1:30: Mozart's **"La Clemenza di Tito,"** with Frank Lopardo, Luca Pisaroni, Heidi Grant Murphy, Melanie Diener, Anne Sofie von Otter, and Sarah Connolly; James Levine conducts. ♦ May 12 at 7:30 and May 16 at 8: An experienced cast—including Sylvie Valayre, Marcello Giordani, and James Morris—take their places for a springtime run of **"Tosca"**; James Conlon. ♦ May 13 and May 17 at 8: Like the other "little masters" of early-twentieth-century Italian opera—think of Leoncavallo, who wrote "Pagliacci," or Cilea, who wrote "Adriana Lecouvreur"—Franco Alfano has been remembered only for a single opera. Too bad it's another man's work: Puccini's "Turandot," which Alfano completed at the request of Toscanini (who later vilified him for it). But Plácido Domingo, in the twilight of his career, has shown a taste for this repertory, and the Met is mounting Alfano's colorful **"Cyrano de Bergerac"** just for him. Also with Sondra Radvanovsky, Raymond Very, and Anthony Michaels-Moore; Marco Armiliato. ♦ May 14 at 8: Andrei Serban's production of Gounod's **"Faust,"** with Roberto Alagna (in the title role), René Pape (a magnificent Méphistophélès), Soile Isokoski, Kristine Jepson, and Dmitri Hvorostovsky; Steven Crawford. ♦ May 15 at 5: In a benefit for the Met's Pension Fund, the company is honoring a beloved artist—Mirella Freni—on the fiftieth anniversary of her operatic début. The soprano, still a potent performer, will be joined by such esteemed colleagues as Frederica von Stade, Salvatore Licitra, and Hvorostovsky in a program of scenes and arias from works by Cilea, Ponchielli, Giordano, and the complete third act of "Eugene Onegin"; Levine. (Metropolitan Opera House. 212-362-6000.)

AMATO OPERA
The Lower East Side's shoestring chamber-opera company, a crew of aspiring young professionals and robust amateurs, launches into its final production of the season, **"L'Elisir d'Amore,"** directed by Maestro Anthony Amato. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 212-228-8200. May 14 at 7:30 and May 15 at 2:30. Through June 12.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC
The last time the Philharmonic mounted a complete performance of Stravinsky's "Histoire du Soldat" was in 1966, with a roster that included the violinist Jaime Laredo and Aaron Copland, John Cage, and Elliott Carter in the speaking roles. Pinchas Zukerman will be the violinist this time, with the dramatic firepower coming from the theatre world—F. Murray Abraham (as the Narrator), Marian Seldes (the Devil), and Tim Blake Nelson (the Soldier). Zukerman plays in and conducts Bach's Brandenburg Concertos Nos. 3 and 5 in the first half. (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-875-5656. May 12 at 7:30 and May 13-14 at 8.)

NEW YORK SCANDIA SYMPHONY: HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN'S "THE TINDER BOX"
Manhattan's Scandinavian-centered orchestra, conducted by Dorrit Matson, has been selected by the Andersen 2005 Foundation to offer the American première of Poul Schierbeck's musicalization of the fairy tale, narrated by the actor Richard Thomas. Music by Sibelius (including the "Karelia Suite") completes the program. (Trinity Church, Broadway at Wall St. May 12 at 1. A donatation is suggested.)

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Daniel Barenboim brings his high-octane Midwest band to Carnegie Hall. May 13 at 8: Mahler's Ninth Symphony is the capstone of the first program, which begins with what will be an unabashedly post-Wagnerian performance of Bach's Orchestral Suite No. 2 in B Minor (leavened by the sinuous phrasings of Mathieu Dufour's solo flute). ♦ May 14 at 8: Pierre Boulez leads the orchestra in an all-Bartók program that includes the Piano Concerto No. 1

YUKO SHIMIZU

(with Barenboim at the keyboard) and the Concerto for Orchestra. ♦ May 15 at 3: Barenboim returns to the podium to lead a concert that places Boulez among the giants, conducting the French master's "Notations I-IV and VII" in between performances of Wagner's Act I Prelude to "Parsifal" and Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. (212-247-7800.)

EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK: "VIVALDI'S WOMEN"
The original-instrument orchestra, conducted by Frederick Renz, re-creates a concert of Vivaldi's music given by the composer-priest's legendary orchestra of orphan girls at the Ospedale Della Pietà in Venice. (St. James Church, Madison Ave. at 71st St. 212-280-0330. May 14 at 8.)

CERDDORION
The choral group celebrates its tenth anniversary with new works by David Lang ("Again: After Ecclesiastes") and Elliot Z. Levine, along with music by Monteverdi, Schütz, Lisa Bielawa, and Morten Lauridsen. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. May 15 at 7:30. Tickets at the door.)

CENTRAL SYNAGOGUE: "A SACRED BOND"
A new series, conceived to spotlight the grand temple's new Casavant Frères organ, continues with a concert commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The program blends works by Walton, Vaughan Williams, Shostakovich, Philip Glass, and Glass's protégé, the young post-minimalist Nico Muhly, performed by the organist Martin Ennis, the Chiara Quartet, and members of the Juilliard Choral Union; WNYC's John Schaefer hosts. (Lexington Ave. at 55th St. 212-868-4444. May 15 at 7:30.)

VOICES OF ASCENSION: "A BACH CELEBRATION"
Dennis Keene conducts his chorus and orchestra in a selection of motets, along with the great Magnificat in D Major. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. 212-358-1469. May 17 at 8.)

RECITALS

NEW YORK FESTIVAL OF SONG: "LOST TRIBES OF VAUDEVILLE"
Jewish and black musical cultures met in the storied music of vaudeville, which the pianist and arranger Steven Blier celebrates by leading a concert of songs by Berlin, Arlen, Ellington, Will Marion Cook, and others, featuring the voices of Judy Kaye and Darius de Haas. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. May 11 at 8.)

BARGEMUSIC
May 12-13 at 7:30: Whatever happened to Helen Huang? The twenty-two-year-old pianist, thrust onto the world stage at ten, is still performing, though she's keeping a lower profile; her program includes Schumann's "Kreisleriana," two Scarlatti sonatas, and two Rachmaninoff transcriptions of music by the real Kreisler, Fritz. ♦ May 14 at 7:30 and May 15 at 4: Huang joins the violist Toby Appel and other musicians for music by Haydn, Saint-Saëns, and Schumann (the Piano Quartet). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

"THE ANDSNES PROJECT"
Carnegie's Zankel Hall is living up to its billing as a space where distinguished artists can take chances. The pianist Leif Ove Andsnes ends his series of "Perspectives" concerts there with a program that includes two challenging works by György Kurtág ("Ligatura" and "Games") along with Schumann's obscure Six Études in Canonic Form for Pedal Piano (in Debussy's two-piano arrangement) and his celebrated Piano Quintet. Andsnes's colleagues include the pianist Håvard Gimse and the cellist Jean-Guihen Queyras. (212-247-7800. May 13 at 7:30.)

DA CAPO CHAMBER PLAYERS
Steve Reich's classic "New York Counterpoint" (along with music by Mario Davidovsky and Judith Shatin) is the highlight of a program of works that blend acoustic instruments and electronic sounds. (Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St. 212-219-3006. May 15 at 7:30.)

ANDRÉ WATTS
The Metropolitan Museum winds up its concert season with an "illustrated talk" on Beethoven's

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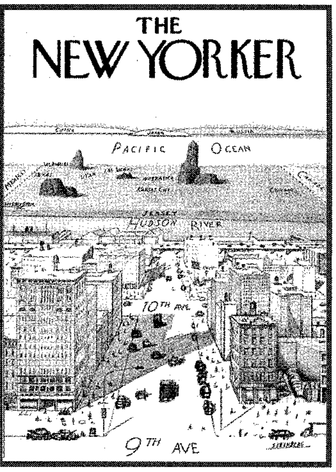

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Piano Sonata in D Major, Op. 10, No. 3, given by the distinguished American pianist. (Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. 212-570-3949. May 15 at 8.)

SARAH CONNOLLY

The mezzo-soprano, who just made a splendid début in Mozart's "Clemenza di Tito" at the Met, offers songs by Brahms, Hahn, Korngold, and Weill. (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. May 16 at 7:30.)

OUT OF TOWN

CARAMOOR: ROBERT MCDUFFIE AND CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR

Westchester's music festival gets a lead on the summer season with a recital by the violinist and the pianist, ardent champions of music new and old. Their program includes sonatas by Robert Beaser and Beethoven (No. 7 in C Minor), along with Arvo Pärt's "Spiegel im Spiegel" and Bartók's two Rhapsodies; the venue is the Caramoor Music Room, a sumptuously decorated space in the Rosen estate. (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252. May 14 at 8.)

MOVIES OPENING

KICKING & SCREAMING

Will Ferrell plays a youth-soccer coach and Robert Duvall plays his hypercompetitive father, in a comedy directed by Jesse Dylan. Opening May 13. (In wide release.)

KINGS AND QUEEN

Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening May 13. (Cinema Village and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

LAYER CAKE

In a British thriller directed by Matthew Vaughn, a professional criminal is pulled back into the business when he tries to retire. With Daniel Craig, Colm Meaney, and Sienna Miller. Opening May 13. (In wide release.)

MAD HOT BALLROOM

Eleven-year-old New York City schoolchildren prepare for a ballroom-dancing competition, in a documentary directed by Marilyn Agrelo. Opening May 13. (Cinemas 1, 2, and 3 and Sunshine Cinema.)

MA MÈRE

A teen-age boy (Louis Garrel) and his mother (Isabelle Huppert) develop a sexually charged relationship when the boy's father dies unexpectedly. Directed by Christophe Honoré. In French, English, and Spanish. Opening May 13. (Quad Cinema.)

MINDHUNTERS

Renny Harlin directed this action thriller, in which an élite group of F.B.I. profilers must root out the serial killer among them. With Val Kilmer, Christian Slater, and LL Cool J. Opening May 13. (In wide release.)

MONSTER-IN-LAW

Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening May 13. (In wide release.)

UNLEASHED

A martial-arts action thriller with Jet Li, Morgan Freeman, and Bob Hoskins. Opening May 13. (In wide release.)

NOW PLAYING

À TOUT DE SUITE

In 1975, Lili (Isild Le Besco), a quiet upper-bourgeois Parisian girl bored with her twin roles as daughter and art student, abruptly takes up with a handsome, gentle-looking boy (Ouassini Embarek) of Moroccan descent. The boy turns out to be a bank robber. Wanted by the police, he takes her off to Spain, Morocco, and then Greece, where he abandons her and she drifts around on her own. Based on the actual experience of Elisabeth Fanger (who wrote a memoir called "When I Was 19"), Benoît Jacquot's film holds our interest with the arbitrariness of its heroine's behavior. We have no idea why she falls so heedlessly for this particular boy, who is virtually silent, or why anyone else does what he does. In the movie's proud refusal to explain or open up the characters, one can discern decades of French dedication to the *acte gratuit* as well as to elements of the terse anti-psychological dramaturgy favored by the New Wave directors. Jacquot shoots his tale in rather muddy, low-contrast black-and-white, and his young star's expressions alternate between radiant longing and a blankness so complete that one wonders at times if the heroine isn't merely stupid. This surly celebration of freedom isn't really satisfying or fun, but, then, it's not intended to be. In French.—*David Denby* (Angelika Film Center.)

THE BEST OF YOUTH

Six hours is a long time to spend in the company of somebody else's family, although, to be fair, it beats having to spend six hours in the company of one's own. Thanks to the director Marco Tullio Giordana, we are granted access to the Caratis, a fictional Roman clan, whose story, starting in 1966, covers more than thirty years and shows in two blocks of three hours. We follow the aging of the Carati parents and the progress of their four children—above all, of Nicola (Luigi Lo Cascio), smiling and slightly guarded, who grows up to be a psychologist, and of his handsome brother Matteo (Alessio Boni), whose rage for order finds him joining the police. When Nicola's partner, Giulia (Sonia Bergamasco)—her political principles as severe as her cheekbones—walks out on him and joins a terrorist cell, the stage is set for confrontation; to Giordana's credit, such clashes do not feel like a contrivance. The pace of the work, more leisurely than sluggish, allows the characters to clasp and hold our attention, to show as much bafflement as decisiveness, and to be brushed, rather than overwhelmed, by the major motions of history. In Italian, though, given the symphonic range of hand movements on display, the subtitles are largely redundant.—*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in our issue of 4/25/05.) (Cinema Village.)

CLOSE-UP

On a bus in Tehran, an unemployed movie buff reading a published screenplay passes himself off as its author, the internationally acclaimed filmmaker Mohsen Makhmalbaf. Invited into the home of a credulous family, the impostor announces his plan to make a film starring their adult son. The father, growing skeptical, invites a journalist to visit, who, in turn, brings the police. Having read an account of this true case, the director Abbas Kiarostami decided to make a film of it, in which each participant would reënact his own role—including Kiarostami himself. In so doing, he also gained permission to film the trial, which was presided over by religious authorities. In this 1990 masterpiece of ironic reflexivity, Kiarostami's clear, self-possessed vision reveals the dogma of others while conveying none of its own, besides a faith in the power of the cinema itself to expose the artifice on which it depends. If religion is the suppression of the evidence of the eye through the dictate of the word, such calmly unwavering images, with their wry humor and generous sympathy, have the force of a quiet, steadfast resistance. In Farsi.—*Richard Brody* (BAM Rose Cinemas; May 11.)

CRASH

A brazenly alive and heartbreaking film about the rage and foolishness of intolerance—the mutual abrasions of white, black, Latino, Middle Eastern, and Asian citizens in the great and strange city of Los Angeles. The movie starts off with separate vignettes in which the characters run afoul of each other, say things better left unsaid, and get into terrible trouble. Later, they cross paths again, sometimes in bizarre coincidences that feel exactly right; some of these scenes play out at the edge of insanity, where contentiousness spills over into tragedy or farce. The furiously candid screenplay was written by Paul Haggis and Robert Moresco, and the picture was directed by Haggis, who, in his first time out as director, demonstrates an amazing skill with actors. Don Cheadle, as a withdrawn, melancholy police detective, is the star, and the other players include Terrence Howard and Thandie Newton as an upper-class African-American couple, Brendan Fraser and Sandra Bullock as an L.A. district attorney and his bitchy wife, Chris (Ludacris) Bridges and Larenz Tate as carjackers, Matt Dillon and Ryan Phillippe as cops, and Shaun Toub as an Iranian shopkeeper who thinks everyone is out to cheat him. The gentle electronic score is by Mark Isham.—*D.D.* (5/2/05) (In wide release.)

DVD NOTES
TWO BY MANKIEWICZ

ANDREA VENTURA

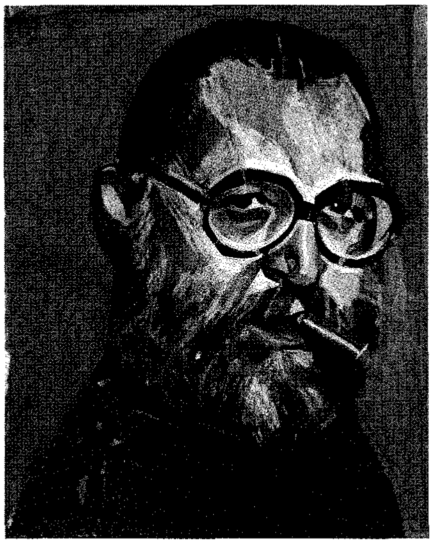
In his 1958 adaptation of Graham Greene's **"The Quiet American"** (M-G-M), Joseph Mankiewicz repudiated the novel's historical accuracy—as the C.I.A. had advised—by blaming Communists for bombings that had been carried out by American-backed Vietnamese forces. The change heightened the story's dramatic power, turning the journalist Thomas Fowler, Greene's smug surrogate in French-run Saigon, into a jealous cynic (Michael Redgrave) who is duped by a Communist frameup into assisting in the murder of an idealistic young American agent (Audie Murphy)—and who, in the process, loses and ruins the woman they both love. The garrulous Englishman's narration, glib in the novel, thus became a guilt-racked voice-over confession in the film. The resulting political message, however, inhibited Mankiewicz, whose direction was unusually unassertive. Still, he had a kind of perfect visual pitch, and the film is always spot on, always the right thing at the right time.

"Always the right thing at the right time" is also how Brad Bishop (Jeffrey Lynn) describes his former sweetheart, Addie Ross, in Mankiewicz's 1949 film, **"A Letter to Three Wives"** (Fox Home Entertainment). The film focusses on three suburban couples who range from the comfortably struggling to the filthy rich; the wives are boarding a Hudson River boat when they receive a note from Addie announcing that she has run off with one of their husbands. Which one, she does not say. The film could have been called "Scenes from Three Marriages." It presents, in flashbacks, each wife's tremulous view of her domestic discord, and the crises are worthy of Bergman: there is the resentful silence of good cheer, the cultural combat of money versus art, and overtly sexual class warfare. Mankiewicz's writing is florid and expressive, but his daring direction makes it burst into life. When Jeanne Crain, as one of the wives, utters the film's most anguished line, she gives a defiant, dramatically unmotivated look into the camera, four years before Bergman had Harriet Andersson do the same in "Monika." This gesture of existential complicity would become a cornerstone of the French New Wave. Despite its emotional intensity, the film is comic, buoyantly so, and the magical ending raises wit to a metaphysical dimension.

—*Richard Brody*

DOUBLE DARE
An entertaining documentary focussing on the lives of two stuntwomen. Jeannie Epper is a grandmother who has worked in the business for decades—she's doubled for Kathleen Turner and Shirley MacLaine, among others—and Zoe Bell, a relative newcomer, was nominated for a World Stunt Award for doubling for Uma Thurman in "Kill Bill." The filmmaker Amanda Micheli eagerly explores the challenges that these unconventional women face—their battles with injuries and the aging process, their family responsibilities—and creates a compelling account of their courageous, physical work.—*Bruce Diones* (Quad Cinema.)

FEVER PITCH
A conventional Farrelly-brothers comedy that plugs into something curious along the way. Jimmy Fallon plays a joke-happy Boston schoolteacher who successfully woos Drew Barrymore's high-flying corporate consultant, only to lose her to his obsession with the Boston Red Sox. The teacher's house, down to the Yankee toilet paper, is a Sox mausoleum; he spends his summers in a box seat passed down by his uncle, surrounded by fans who have been muttering the same curses and masochistic riffs for decades. The filmmakers are split between making the Sox obsession a lovably funny quirk and suggesting that it's haplessly infantile. Plotted against the 2004 season, the movie ends with the team's surprise World Series victory. One doesn't expect a sequel in which Sox fans have come down from the grandeur of endless defeat and are forced to confront the banality of success.—*D.D.* (4/18/05) (In wide release.)



"Once Upon a Time: Sergio Leone," at BAM Rose Cinemas, May 13-22.

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
A bold, not to say foolhardy, attempt to divert the work of Douglas Adams, with its flood of ruminative wit, into a mainstream movie. Martin Freeman stars as Arthur Dent, your basic tetchy Brit, who is dragged along by his un-British—indeed, unhuman—friend Ford Prefect (Mos Def) on a trip through some of the more risible highlights of deep space. If you are not familiar with the conceit of the "Hitchhiker" franchise, whose previous incarnations include a radio series, four novels, and a TV show, you should find much to relish in the revelation that other worlds can be just as wearisome and mismanaged as this one. Many gags, ranging from Marvin the suicidal robot (voiced by Alan Rickman) to the Babel fish that you insert into one ear if you wish to understand all languages, survive, yet the film feels frantic and scattershot, and its rush toward a happy ending is wholly alien, as it were, to the wry pessimism of the original. Most of the cast, understandably, have a stranded and bewildered air, with the exception of Bill Nighy; he plays Slartibartfast, a donnish designer of planetary coastlines who once won an award for Norway.—*A.L.* (5/9/05) (In wide release.)

THE HOLY GIRL
Amalia (María Alche), a radiantly beautiful teen-ager growing up in a family-run hotel in a small Argentine city, is pulled between traditional religious teachings that insist on a saintlike career for women and sexual longings that are just as fierce as a teen-age boy's. When a doctor attending a conference rubs up against her in a crowd, she reaches out to him, but he doesn't want an affair; he just wants to touch. Lucrecia Martel's gently comic movie is not about perversion; it's about the varieties of intimacy—between mothers and daughters, teen-age girls, doctors and patients. Martel shoots her movie with rapt attention to faces and bodies in the foreground while the life of the hotel spins loosely in the background. It's a distinctive visual style, but it's not a dramatic style, and the movie, for all its talent, isn't pulled together enough. Yet Martel is someone to watch: she has a fantastic eye for detail and mood. With Mercedes Morán as the heroine's divorced mother and Carlos Belloso as the doctor. In Spanish.—*D.D.* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

THE INTERPRETER
The new Sydney Pollack movie is set at the United Nations: not the bear pit of recent wrangling but a barely ruffled pool of international good will. Among its many altruists is Silvia Broome (Nicole Kidman), an interpreter who was raised in Africa. One night, she hears what she believes to be the murmurings of a plot: a plan to kill Edmond Zuwanie (Earl Cameron), the murderous president of Matobo, a fictitious African republic. She has cause to hate him, but does that make her a suspect as well as a witness? On her case is Keller (Sean Penn), a Secret Service agent and purveyor of universal sadness. He starts to investigate Silvia and inches toward the verge of falling in love; if the movie were ten hours long, one could easily picture the two of them throwing cau-

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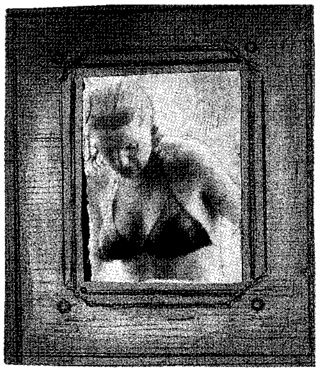
CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
GIRL WATCHER



MIROSLAV TICHÝ

"I am an observer, observing as thoroughly as possible," Miroslav Tichý says in the brief filmed profile that accompanies his first gallery show, at Nolan/Eckman. The Czech artist, who is eighty this year, has a mischievous gleam in his eye, and it's easy to see why—since the fifties, the primary focus of his observation has been women: sunbathing in bikinis, shopping in miniskirts, taking an outdoor shower, strolling, chatting. Because he worked surreptitiously and from a distance, his pictures can be unsettlingly intimate, like paparazzi or surveillance shots. But there's something so obsessive, eccentric, and delirious about the work that it's hard not to fall under its spell. Tichý's homemade cameras—fashioned from spools, mailing tubes, bottle caps, and scavenged lenses—produce soft, cloudy photos that look like they've been taken in a dream. Breasts, buttocks, and limbs hover just out of focus like the disembodied figures in spirit photos. Tichý's goddesses are spectral but also earthy; their radiant ordinariness is their greatest charm.

—Vince Aletti

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tion to the wind and going out for a drink. The plot, meanwhile, follows an unusual course, rising to a tense and wiry scene involving a baddie, a bomb, and a bus but slumping to a thrill-free finale, whose credibility will explode if you say the words "swipe card" out loud. With Catherine Keener, thank heaven, as a fellow-agent, and the only person present to see the joke.—*A.L.* (4/25/05) (In wide release.)

JIMINY GLICK IN LALAWOOD
Ever since his début on Comedy Central a few years ago, Martin Short's Jiminy Glick, a bulbous celebrity talk-show interviewer, has been one of the great comic creations. Sycophantic yet rude, lascivious yet moralistic, Jiminy, who can't seem to get the credits of his guests straight, is the essence of hostile show-biz creepiness. On TV, Jiminy's celebrity guests (Tom Hanks, Billy Crystal, etc.) would crack up helplessly—they knew that in Short they had met their match. This loose-jointed movie, which sends Jiminy to the Toronto Film Festival, is funny only when he is conducting TV-style interviews. The rest of the movie is laboriously gross—it seems aimed at teen-agers rather than at the sophisticated audience that would understand Short's satire. Still, you may want to see Short do his thing with Steve Martin, Kurt Russell, and other celebs.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center and Empire 25.)

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
At the butt end of the twelfth century, a blacksmith (Orlando Bloom) follows his noble father (Liam Neeson) to Jerusalem, in search of salvation, wealth, and adventure, though not necessarily in that order. He is shipwrecked en route, emerging from the wreck with the bleary air of a groom awaking from a successful stag party. This is one of many underpowered moments in the film, which, despite being directed by Ridley Scott, contrives to make a great and often magnificent fuss about the doings of a feeble hero; in this respect it is the very opposite of Scott's "Gladiator," which worked hard to earn its bombast. Much is made of the power play between the King of Jerusalem (a leper in a metal mask), his exotic and plainly loopy sister (Eva Green), his military adviser (Jeremy Irons), and a brace of leering villains (Marton Csokas and Brendan Gleeson). Opposing them is the mighty Saladin (Ghassan Massoud) and, more injurious still, the filmmakers' anxiety about causing offense to the faithful of any creed. The outcome is a movie so desperate to provoke comparisons with the religious enmities of today that it somehow forgets the fire in its own belly. With Edward Norton.—*A.L.* (5/9/05) (In wide release.)

KUNG FU HUSTLE
The director Stephen Chow (he also wrote, produced, and stars) assembled this fantastic martial-arts film as cleverly as Tex Avery approached animation. Characters run down the road at super-speed, take flowerpots to the head without a whimper, and fly through the air deliriously. The plot, about a group of over-the-hill, tenement-living kung-fu masters with superpowers who fight a group of axe-wielding gangsters, is anarchic; the cast of Hong Kong actors is comic perfection, especially Yuen Qiu (who plays a hair-curlered, cigarette-smoking landlady). The computer-enhanced stunt work is astonishing, but it's Chow's ability to find the humor in his flights of fancy that's truly distinctive. In Cantonese and Mandarin.—*B.D.* (In wide release.)

MYSTERIOUS SKIN
The director Gregg Araki's film, based on the sensational (in every sense of the word) novel by Scott Heim, retains the lo-fi road-movie atmosphere of his previous works ("The Living End," "The Doom Generation"), but there's a heartening maturity this time around. The story concerns an adolescent hustler (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), who's haunted by child abuse, and his former Little League teammate (Brady Corbet), who's attempting to find an answer to the amnesia he suffers when trying to recall a past incident. The actors capture the sad yearning of the characters, and Michelle Trachtenberg and Elisabeth Shue give strong supporting performances. Although this is Araki's best work, the film is finally too dreamy to dramatize the urgent storytelling of the novel. It drifts with an on-the-road aimlessness, losing its initial sexy, dark power.—*B.D.* (Film Forum.)

PORGY AND BESS
Otto Preminger, filming George Gershwin's opera in lifelike settings, kept the camera rolling in front of such artists as Sidney Poitier, Dorothy Dandridge, Pearl Bailey, and Sammy Davis, Jr., for vast, sculptural takes of four minutes or more. The starkly dramatic results would be best watched as a silent film in order to avoid the stentorian singing voices dubbed in for the two leads' arias; the acting, however, is quietly forceful, and Poitier plays the crippled Porgy with the most heartrending of techniques: he walks on his knees. Preminger achieves a rare embodiment of substance in style: the stately, massed movements of the oppressed inhabitants of Catfish Row—while hinting at great social actions soon to come—evince a spiritual dignity as strong as the music's and suggest a hieratic pageantry of Old Testament power. The Gershwin estate sought to destroy all existing prints of Preminger's film for its infidelities to the score. But they were shamefully misguided; Preminger overcomes the film's musical failings—and the opera's contrivances and stereotypes—to recapture Gershwin's underlying humanistic vision of celebration and deliverance. Released in 1959.—*R.B.* (Museum of the Moving Image; May 14-15.)

SAHARA
Clive Cussler's franchise novel about the adventurers Dirk Pitt (Matthew McConaughey) and Al Giordino (Steve Zahn) gets the big-bucks treatment in the director Breck Eisner's Indiana Jones-style romp. The overstuffed plot, a Cussler trademark, concerns a missing Civil War ship, a beautiful W.H.O. doctor (Penélope Cruz), and, of course, buried treasure. McConaughey gives Pitt an irresistible masculine charm and energy that helps link the plot together, and Zahn brings a joyous, look-at-me spontaneity to the action. Their performances complement and support each other, and Eisner, who has a great eye for location and detail, keeps the whole whirligig plot turning with lots of pop and lots of corn. A treat.—*B.D.* (In wide release.)

3-IRON
Kim Ki-duk ("Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter . . . and Spring") wrote, directed, and edited this exquisite modern morality tale that doubles as a ghost story. A handsome young man (Jae Hee) cruises the city on his motorcycle, canvassing neighborhoods both rich and poor and taping a printed flyer to each doorknob. When he returns and finds a flyer undisturbed, he expertly picks the lock and makes himself at home. He bathes, has a drink, prepares a meal from food found in the refrigerator, takes a few digital photos of himself, cleans, makes repairs, and leaves. He thinks he is moving through the world without disturbing it, but there are consequences to his actions. Lee Seung-yeon plays a woman who accompanies the interloper for a time; the two never exchange a word but share a tender romance and a scary, sometimes violent adventure. In Korean.—*Ken Marks* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

Also Playing

A LOT LIKE LOVE: In wide release. **PALINDROMES:** Angelika Film Center. **THE UPSIDE OF ANGER:** In wide release (4/4/05). **XXX: STATE OF THE UNION:** In wide release.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (212-505-5110)—"New Filmmakers." May 11 at 8:15: "Pledge of Allegiance Blues" (2004, Lisa Seidenberg). ♦ "Essential Cinema." May 12 at 7:30: "Une Simple Histoire" (1958, Marcel Hanoun; in French, without subtitles). ♦ May 14 at 5: "Zorns Lemma" (1970, Hollis Frampton). ♦ May 15 at 4: "Serene Velocity" (1970, Ernie Gehr; silent) and "Still"

(1970, Gehr). ♦ "Jeff Krulik: Nut Magnet." May 13 at 8: "Nut Magnet Omnibus." ♦ May 14 at 6: "Traveling Sideshow: Shocked and Amazed!" ♦ May 14 at 9: "Go Go World a/k/a Go! Go! Go! World" (1964, Antonio Margheriti; in Italian). ♦ May 15 at 6: "The Parking Lot Odyssey." ♦ May 15 at 9: "Trapped by the Mormons" (1922, H. B. Parkinson; silent).

BAM ROSE CINEMAS

30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—Through May 12: "A Tribute to Susan Sontag." May 11 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "Close-Up" (†). ♦ May 12 at 7:30: "¡Cuba Sí!" (1961, Chris Marker; in French), "Je Vous Salue Sarajevo" (1994, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), six Sontag screen tests (1964, Andy Warhol), and interviews with My Lai veterans (1971, Joseph Strick). ♦ Through May 22: Sergio Leone Westerns. May 13-14 at 2, 5:30, and 9: "Once Upon a Time in the West" (1968). ♦ May 15 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "A Fistful of Dollars" (1964). ♦ "Paul Robeson Speaks!" May 16 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:30: "Jericho" (1937, Thornton Freeland). ♦ May 17 at 7:30: "Sanders of the River" (1935, Zoltan Korda).

FILM FORUM

W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—Through May 17: The films of Harold Lloyd. May 11 at 1, 4:25, and 7:50: "Doctor Jack" (1922, Fred C. Newmeyer; silent). ♦ May 11 at 2:25, 5:50, and 9:15: "The Cat's Paw" (1934, Sam Taylor). ♦ May 12 at 1, 3:50, 6:40, and 9:40: "The Sin of Harold Diddlebock" (1947, Preston Sturges). ♦ May 12 at 2:45, 5:35, and 8:25: "A Sailor-Made Man" (1921, Newmeyer; silent). ♦ May 13-17 at 1, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, and 10: "Welcome Danger" (1929, Clyde Bruckman and Malcolm St. Clair; silent).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL

55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160)—"Occupation of France Series." May 17 at 12:30, 4, and 7: "Four Bags Full" (1956, Claude Autant-Lara; in French and German).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480)—"First Nations/First Features: A Showcase of World Indigenous Film and Media." May 12 at 6: "Radiance" (1998, Rachel Perkins). ♦ May 12 at 8:30: "Smoke Signals" (1998, Chris Eyre). ♦ May 13 at 6: "Te Rua" (1991, Barry Barclay). ♦ May 14 at 2: "The Land Has Eyes" (2004, Vilsoni Hereniko; in Rotuman and English). ♦ May 14 at 4: "A Bride of the Seventh Heaven" (2004, Anastasia Lapsui and Markku Lehmuskallio; in Nenets). ♦ May 14 at 6:30: "Pathfinder" (1987, Nils Gaup; in Saami). ♦ May 14 at 8:45: "5th World" (2005, Blackhorse Lowe; in English and Navajo). ♦ May 15 at 2:30: "The Doe Boy" (2001, Randy Redroad). ♦ May 15 at 5: "Beneath Clouds" (2002, Ivan Sen). ♦ May 16 at 6: "Powerful Mountain" (1998, Crisanto Manzano Avella; in Zapotec and Spanish). ♦ May 16 at 8: "Itam Hakim, Hopiit" (1985, Victor Masayesva, Jr.; in Hopi and English). ♦ May 16 at 8:30: "Angels of the Earth" (2001, Patricio Luna; in Aymara) and "Loving Each Other in the Shadows" (2001, Marcelina Cárdenas; in Quechua). ♦ "112 Years of Cinema." May 11 at 6: "All My Babies" (1953, George C. Stoney). ♦ May 11 at 8: "Surviving Desire" (1991, Hal Hartley). ♦ May 11 at 8: "Elephant Boy" (1937, Robert Flaherty and Zoltan Korda). ♦ May 12 at 6: "Four More Years" (1972, TVTV). ♦ May 12 at 8: "The Honeymoon Killers" (1970, Leonard Kastle). ♦ May 13 at 8:30: "The Boy with Green Hair" (1948, Joseph Losey). ♦ May 14 at 4: "Taxi Driver" (1976, Martin Scorsese). ♦ May 14 at 2: "Little Caesar" (1931, Mervyn LeRoy). ♦ May 14 at 6:30: "Straight Shooting" (1917, Jack Ford; silent). ♦ May 14 at 8:30: "Diner" (1982, Barry Levinson). ♦ May 15 at 2: "Love Affair" (1939, Leo McCarey). ♦ May 15 at 5: "The Tenth Symphony" (1918, Abel Gance; silent). ♦ May 16 at 5:30: "The Last Laugh" (1924, F. W. Murnau; silent).

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—"Cinema Tropical." May 13 at 7:30: "La Ciénaga" (2001, Lucrecia Martel; in Spanish). ♦ "Black Light: Films from the African Diaspora." May 14-15 at 3 and 6:30: "Porgy and Bess" (†).

SUNSHINE CINEMA

143 E. Houston St. (212-330-8182)—Midnight movies. May 13-14: "Raiders of the Lost Ark" (1981, Steven Spielberg).

THALIA THEATRE

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (212-864-5400)—May 15 at 2: "The 400 Blows" (1959, François Truffaut; in French). ♦ May 15 at 4:30: "The Chorus" (2004, Christophe Barratier; in French).

WALTER READE THEATRE

Lincoln Center (212-875-5600)—Through May 31: "Michael Powell: Beauty Unending." May 11 at 1 and 4:20: "The Phantom Light" (1935, Powell). ♦ May 11 at 2:40 and May 12 at 9: "Her Last Affaire" (1936, Powell). ♦ May 11 at 6 and May 12 at 1:30: "Rynox" (1932, Powell). ♦ May 11 at 8:15: "The Magician" (1926, Rex Ingram; silent). ♦ May 12 at 3 and 6: "Red Ensign" (1934, Powell). ♦ May 12 at 4:30 and 7:30: "Crown vs. Stevens" (1936, Powell). ♦ May 13 at 1 and May 15 at 6:45: "The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp" (1943, Powell and Emeric Pressburger). ♦ May 13 at 4:15 and 8:30 and May 15 at 2: "A Matter of Life and Death" (1946, Powell and Pressburger). ♦ May 13 at 6:30 and May 14 at 2: "I Know Where I'm Going" (1945, Powell and Pressburger). ♦ May 14 at 4 and 8:45: "Gone to Earth" (1950, Powell and Pressburger). ♦ May 14 at 6:15 and May 15 at 4:15: "A Canterbury Tale" (1944, Powell and Pressburger). ♦ May 16 at 2: "Contraband" (1940, Powell). ♦ May 16 at 4 and 8:30: "The Small Back Room" (1949, Powell and Pressburger). ♦ May 16 at 6:15: "One of Our Aircraft Is Missing" (1942, Powell and Pressburger). ♦ May 17 at 4: "The Spy in Black" (1939, Powell).

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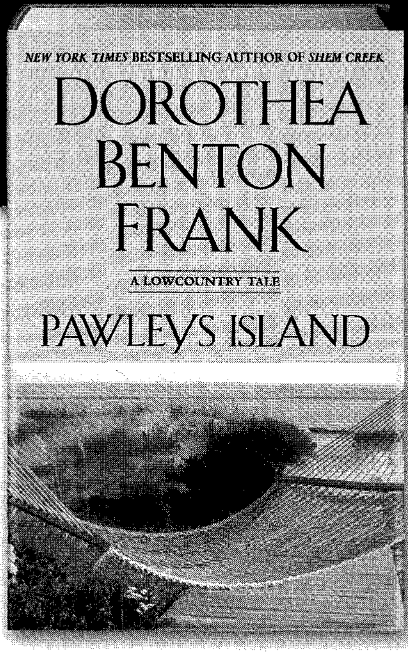
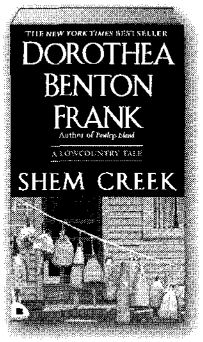




READINGS AND TALKS

"SELECTED SHORTS"
The series that pairs actors and literature continues with a reading from "The Best American Short Stories 2004." Lorrie Moore will introduce pieces by John Updike and John Edgar Wideman, and Fritz Weaver and Ruben Santiago-Hudson will do the honors. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 212-864-5400. May 11 at 6:30.)

"A TRIBUTE TO DRENKA WILLEN"
In her thirty-year career, Willen, a senior editor at Harcourt, has published poetry by Yehuda Amichai, Breyten Breytenbach, Mark Ford, Günter Grass, Tomaž Šalamun, and Wislawa Szymborska. On May 11 at 7, a few of her poets, including Lavinia Greenlaw, Robin Robertson, Philip Schultz, and Charles Simic, read from the work that she's helped bring into the world. The poet and essayist Edward Hirsch will provide the introduction. (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. For more information, call 212-254-9628.)

HAL SIROWITZ
The former Poet Laureate of Queens reads from his work. (BookCourt, 163 Court St., Brooklyn. May 12 at 7. No tickets necessary.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
The new show "Dinosaurs: Ancient Fossils, New Discoveries" goes on display this week, and on opening day the paleontologists Julia Clarke, John Hutchinson, Martin Lockley, Peter Makovicky, and Mark A. Norell will be on hand to answer questions and to report on recent digs in Argentina, China, Europe, Mongolia, and the United States. (Kaufman Theatre, Central Park W. at 77th St. 212-769-5200. May 14 at 1.)

FRANCINE DU PLESSIX GRAY
The biographer, novelist, and *New Yorker* contributor, who was born in France and who survived both the Second World War and being raised in New York by socially ambitious Russian émigrés (her stepfather was Alexander Lieberman, the editorial director of Condé Nast for many years), talks about her new book, "Them: A Memoir of Parents." (Barnes & Noble, Broadway at 66th St. May 17 at 7.)

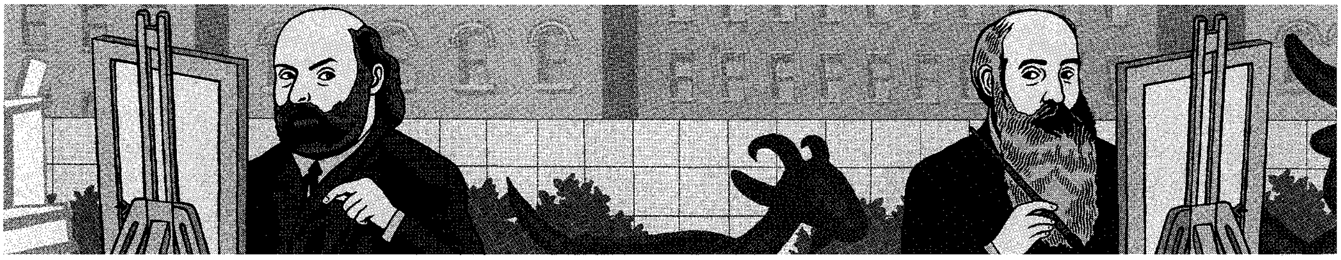
ABOVE AND BEYOND

"ARCHITECTURE DAYS"
A weeklong celebration of steel, stone, and glass, this event, organized by *Architectural Digest*, features guided tours of places that are hard to access (Modulightor, the mod East Side town house designed by Paul Rudolph) and places that are hard to avoid (Grand Central Terminal, Rockefeller Center, and, at least for a certain social set, the meatpacking district). (May 11-17. For more information, call 800-320-2710, or visit www.architecturedays.com.)

"THE MUSTER"
Governors Island, the mostly vacant piece of prime real estate in New York Harbor, has seen a wide range of military action in its history—the Dutch and the English squabbled over it in the seventeenth century, Confederate prisoners and Union soldiers passed through it during the nineteenth century, and it was a key supply depot during the First and Second World Wars—but the island has probably never seen an army like the one that is set to descend this weekend. Organized by Allison Smith, an artist whose work includes dressing life-size porcelain dolls in Civil War garb and staging installations with wooden rifles, "The Muster" is a "creative encampment" featuring fifty campsites on the island, run by Nicole Eisenman, Sam Gordon, and some seventy other artists. They'll don uniforms of their own devising and present the likes of a "Right to Paint" installation, put up by Albert Pedulla; a "Knitting Nation" site, led by Liz Collins; and even a haunted Civil War-style ghost campsite, created by Gary Graham. (May 14 from noon to 5. For more information, call 212-980-3942, or visit www.themuster.com.)

JACQUELINE KENNEDY ONASSIS WALKING TOUR
The New-York Historical Society presents a stroll through the former First Lady's Upper East Side neighborhood, led by Jay Mulvaney, the author of "Kennedy Weddings" and "Jackie: The Clothes of Camelot." (May 15 at 11 A.M. For more information, call 212-817-8215.)

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES
Each of New York's major houses offers two-day sales of postwar and contemporary art, with the big lots offered in the opening-night sessions. At **Sotheby's** (on May 10) the selection of paintings ranges from the deadly serious (Marlene Dumas's "The Messengers") to the lavishly trite ("Amoco," a huge Warhol-Basquiat canvas from the collection of Gianni Versace), with the serene craftsmanship of Chuck Close balancing it all out ("John," expected to bring up to seven million dollars). Sales of African, Oceanic, and pre-Columbian art (May 12) and of American Indian art (May 13) follow. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 212-606-7000.) ♦ The harsh brushstrokes of Edward Hopper's "Chair Car" (estimate on request), the star of the **Christie's** evening sale (May 11), lend emotional complexity to what seems at first to be a light-filled exercise in American tranquillity; the work is surrounded by formidable paintings by such artists as Guston, de Kooning, Rothko, and Agnes Martin. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 212-636-2000.)



MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

ON THE HORIZON

DANCE
CHUNKY MOVE
May 25-June 11

This Australian company, which débuted at the 1995 Melbourne Festival, will be performing "Tense Dave," a dance about one man's personal (and personality) crisis, choreographed by Lucy Guerin, at Dance Theatre Workshop. (212-924-0077.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC
DEBORAH VOIGT
June 9-11

Voigt, newly slim and sounding as ravishing as ever, sings Berg's "Seven Early Songs" in the New York Philharmonic's third-to-last program of the season. Lorin Maazel, who conducts, will also lead the orchestra June 22-25 in the season finale, Mahler's awesome Sixth Symphony. (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-875-5656.)

THE THEATRE
BRITS ONSTAGE
June 9-July 3

"Brits Off Broadway," now in its second year, showcases theatrical writing talent from across the Atlantic. This year's performances include the American première of the bittersweet comedy "Private Fears in Public Spaces," written and directed by Sir Alan Ayckbourn. His company, the Yorkshire-based Stephen Joseph Theatre, will also be making its début. (212-279-4200.)

NIGHT LIFE
JVC JAZZ FESTIVAL
June 14-25

A day after what would have been Doc Cheatham's hundredth birthday, this year's festival opens with a tribute to the trumpeter featuring Nicholas Payton, Clark Terry, Warren Vaché, Jimmy Owens, and others, at the Rose Theatre, and it continues with more than three hundred performers who will appear at venues throughout the city—including the festival's first-ever show in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, which will feature the Bad Plus Trio and others. (212-501-1390.)

ART
TWO MODERNS
June 26-Sept. 12

"Pioneering Modern Painting: Cézanne and Pissarro 1865-1885" will exhibit paintings and drawings that investigate the professional and personal relationship between the two artists. (Museum of Modern Art, 212-708-9400.)

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

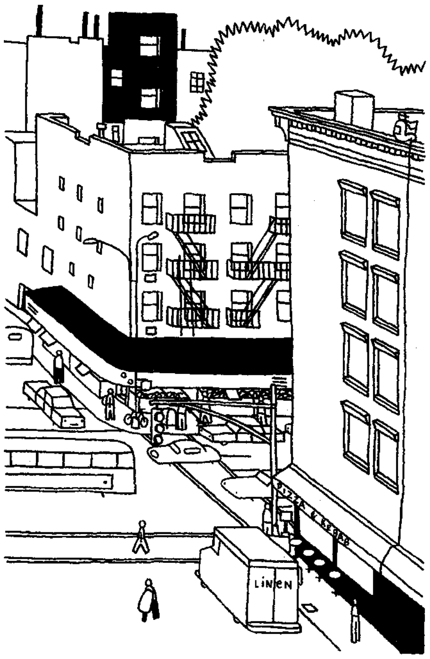
COMMENT

FOOTNOTES

The new Iraqi government that was sworn in last week, after the first democratic elections in the country's history, took three months to create. It is due to expire, according to a timetable set by the United Nations, by December (after the writing of a constitution, a referendum, and another election), which means that almost a third of its life has been spent being born. During this prolonged delivery, the Iraqis, who risked so much by going to vote on January 30th, and gained so much by showing themselves that they could, have steadily lost faith in the leaders they elected. While the politicians have been arguing over jobs—some key positions are still unfilled—the post-election lull in violence has come to an end, and the daily deaths of scores of Iraqis have again become numbingly familiar.

One conclusion to draw from the unlovely spectacle of democratic governance in Iraq is that the two dominant American views of the war were both wrong. Iraq is a far less modern, less united, and less friendly place than the fondest hopes of the war's architects would have had the American public believe. At the same time, the ability of those architects to control the outcome for their own purposes is close to zero. Some war boosters, in and out of the Administration, have nonetheless been quietly declaring mission accomplished redux, with a shrug: they never thought Iraq would be perfect, and everything from here on out is just footnotes. In public, they seem to want Americans to forget all about Iraq.

The group of men who have emerged as Iraq's rulers is dominated by aging former opposition politicians—heavyset power brokers with thick jowls and armed militias. Their backing comes from narrow ethnic and sectarian bases; since the elections, though, the sound of Shiite triumphalism has been growing louder. Shiite leaders have begun to insist on a wholesale purge of the overwhelmingly Sunni Baathists recently brought back into government. The new Prime Minister, Ibrahim al-Jaafari, of the Shiite Islamic Dawa Party, is a man of mediocre talents but with an oratorical gift admired by Iraqis. During his time on the now defunct Governing Council, he used to harass secretaries for coming to work unveiled. According to one leading Shiite cleric, Jaafari was Tehran's choice. The Deputy Prime Minister is the Lazarus-like Ahmad Chalabi, who has converted his poll-tested unpopularity into power through sheer backroom political genius. Washington neoconservatives once claimed that Chalabi was the only real liberal among Iraqi leaders, but he owes his comeback from last year's disgrace to a tactical alliance with the least liberal man in Iraqi politics: the radical (and unstable) cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. Chalabi, a secularist without facial hair, now occupies the seat of hard-line Shiism at the table. A consummate dealmaker, he is holding the oil portfolio until the government selects a minister. That person will come, in all likelihood, from the small party that calls itself the true heir of Sadr's martyred father, who advocated the rule of the clerics. Moqtada's own followers have been given the health ministry; having intimidated doctors by sending armed militiamen to take over hospitals, they will now be able to practice their theocratic medicine with the blessing of the minister.



LAURENT CILLUFFO

In a country emerging from dictatorship, a secular, nonsectarian brand of nationalism seldom fares well. In Iraq, it is represented by the party of Iyad Allawi, the former interim Prime Minister, which came in a distant third in the elections, after the Shiite coalition and the Kurds. Allawi’s party is not included in the new government, and the more moderate Shiites and Sunnis, who don’t want to be governed by clerics of either sect, worry that a conservative and divisive vision of Islam will dominate the constitution. “They have the right to be worried,” said the newly appointed Vice-President, Adel Abdul-Mahdi, who, as the second-in-command of the largest Shiite party, was essentially warning against his own side. “I hope they will stay worried. Victory is the most dangerous moment.”

For the moment, the Kurds represent the greatest hope of the more secular and liberal Iraqis. In the surest sign that the virulent Arab nationalism of the Baathist regime has been repudiated, Jalal Talabani has made history by becoming Iraq’s first Kurdish President. But the Kurds are playing a two-track game—to secure a powerful place in Baghdad, and to consolidate their autonomous region in the north—and if, as seems likely, the roads ever diverge, the Kurds will pursue their separate destiny. The Sunnis, for their part, seem to be balanced on the edge of total rejection. Long in power, they never learned to think of themselves as one group among several, and now no one is able to speak for them. Jaafari’s attempts, in the spirit of inclusiveness, to put Sunnis in half a dozen ministerial posts—most important, defense—keep crumbling, owing to both Sunni disunity and Shiite obstruction. At the swearing-in ceremony, the chair of the Sunni Vice-President, Sheikh Ghazi al-Yawar, was ominously empty—a gesture of protest.

The stakes would be lower if Iraq were not fighting a desperate insurgency that looks more and more like a civil war. Every banal decision, every job offered or withheld, carries the risk of driving more Sunnis to take up weapons, and of forcing Shiites and Kurds to cling tighter to power. Iraq has never had a unifying visionary politician—a Mandela, a Havel, or a Gandhi. The man who comes nearest, Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, isn’t a politician, and, as a Shiite cleric, he has a limited ability to unify; his electoral intervention on behalf of the Shiite coalition tarnished his lustre as a truly national figure. “The Hour is great,” Carlyle wrote, “and the Honorable Gentlemen, I must say, are small.” But you create a democracy with the talent you have, and Iraq’s politicians are confronting the most vexing existential questions.

Two years ago, there was a moment when the Americans might have molded Iraq after their own desire, for better or worse. Their incompetence surprised no one more than the Iraqis. The country has long since hardened into its own shape, and whether it holds together or breaks into pieces is largely up to the Iraqis who now have it in their hands. But the least debt that Americans now owe Iraq is to realize that the footnotes will control the lives of Iraqis for years to come, with plenty of time left for great improvement or great damage.

—*George Packer*

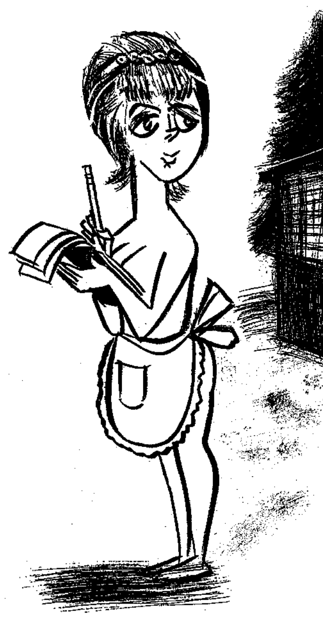
DEPT. OF PHOTOGRAPHY
WHERE THEY ARE NOW

Populated by hundreds of nameless characters, Diane Arbus’s portraits conjure infinite imaginary biographies. Ever since the Metropolitan Museum opened its retrospective of Arbus’s photographs, in March, her subjects have been turning up to give their own versions of their lives, an occurrence that is as illuminating and curious as a man in a red turban surfacing at a Van Eyck exhibit. There’s the peroxided wife, for instance, in “A Family on Their Lawn One Sunday in Westchester, N.Y., 1968,” who has been in touch with the museum and is planning a visit. “Child with a Toy Hand Grenade in Central Park, N.Y.C., 1962,” is living up to his excitable reputation: numerous people have come forward, claiming to be the boy in the picture. “Identical Twins, Roselle, N.J., 1967,” still dress alike, but their once black hair is permed and tinted strawberry blond. They’ve taken to haunting the galleries, answering questions and posing in front of the photograph that Arbus made when they were children.

“I often wonder how many of us there are,” Lorna Anton, the subject of “A Young Waitress at a Nudist Camp, N.J., 1963,” said recently, speaking from her home, in Pensacola, Florida. Anton’s portrait—which shows her wearing nothing but a silver hairband and a starched white demi-apron—was taken at Sunshine Park, a preserve run by the American Sunbathing Association on more than a hundred acres of piney woods near the township of May’s Landing. From 1961 to 1965, Anton and her parents and her younger brother lived there, in a double-wide trailer with a sign out front that her father had carved to depict four blue jays.

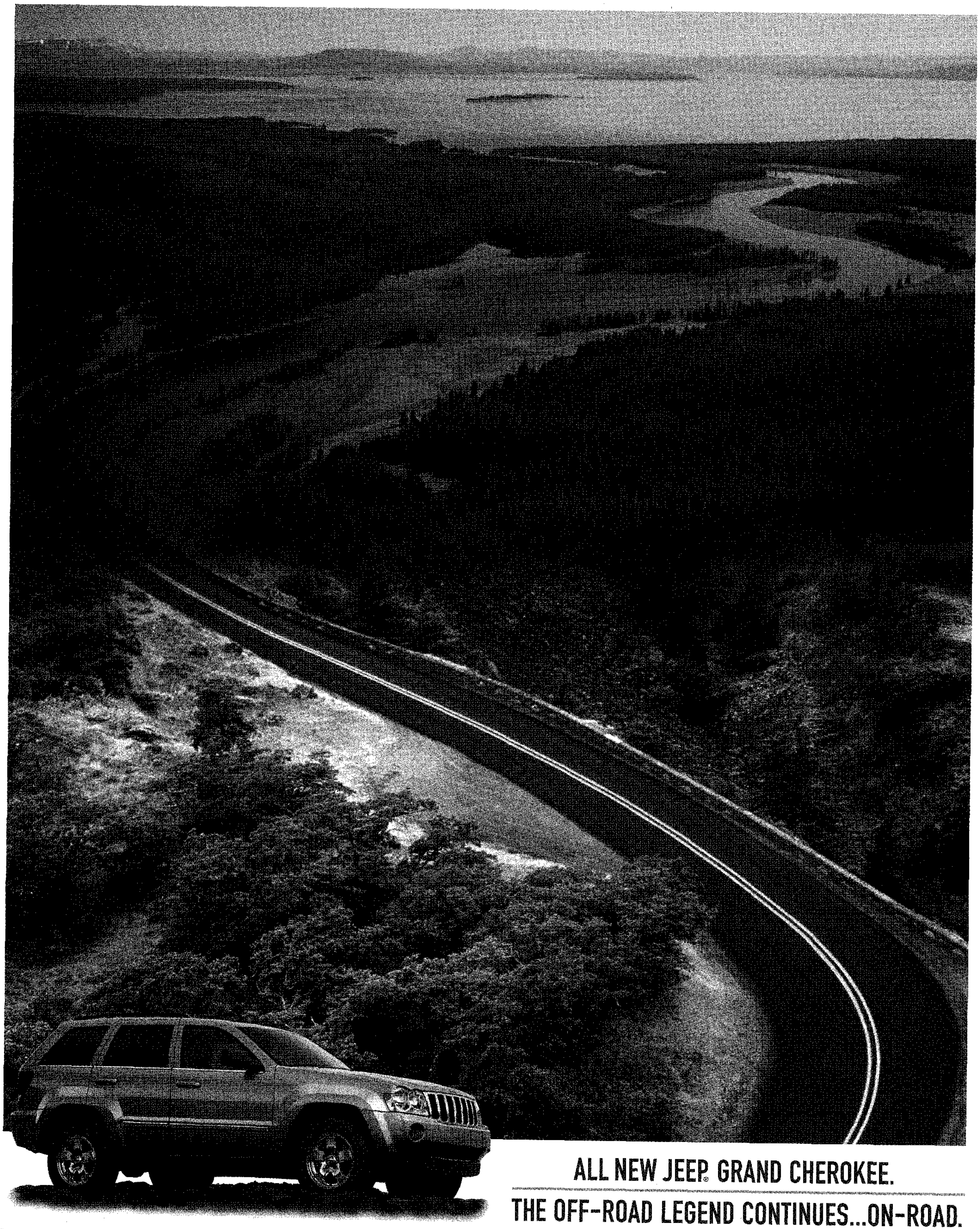
“Arbus came into the dining hall and had a soda,” Anton recalled. “She asked if I had a break coming up, and I said, ‘O.K.,’ not thinking anything really, not that I was destined to be hallmarked as an icon. I was almost thirteen, just at that moment of change, when I was becoming a woman, and here was somebody who was actually very interesting and took an interest in me and wanted to have a photograph, and I thought, Well, O.K., that’s cool.”

It was July, a hot day, so the two walked outside. Lore has it that Arbus often went naked with her nudist subjects, but in Sunshine Park she did not do as the Sunshine Parkers did. (As Anton remembered it, Arbus remained in a tank top and shorts, escaping the sobriquet “cottontail.”) “I said, ‘Well, how do you want me?’ ” Anton recalled. “And she said, ‘Just put your weight on your right leg and put your other leg forward a bit’ ”—a stance that, in the resulting image, emphasizes a nasty cut on Anton’s front shin. “Then she said, ‘Just kind of look over my shoulder,’ which I did. She took maybe one or two shots, and then she



Lorna Anton, in 1963.

TOM BACHTELL



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said thank you and we smiled and off she went." The print that Arbus chose shows the dining hall and, in the middle of the frame, Anton—a Kritios boy with blond, teased hair and nubby breasts. Her restive expression seems to issue a challenge. "There were so many things that interested me in life, and so many things that I wanted to do," Anton explained. "I really was feeling, I think, that I was about to enter on a quest."

Anton made little of the encounter until, several years later, she and her parents received a large manila envelope with a typewritten letter. "The Museum of Modern Art in New York City is arranging a show of my work and I would like to ask your permission to display a photograph of Lorna which I took of her in Sunshine Park in 1963," Arbus wrote. "I am enclosing a print of the photo for you to keep. This is a great honor for me and would be a great honor for Lorna as well." (Anton reread the letter so many times that she committed it to memory.)

By then, the nudist idyll was coming to an end. SPF was replacing baby oil and iodine, and Anton and her family had moved to a split-level house in May's Landing proper. "With puberty comes modesty," Anton said. Furthermore, the family-centered postwar ethos of nudism had given way to a more libertine strain. (In 1948, the New York *Post* columnist Earl Wilson wrote, of a visit to Sunshine Park, "If your wife wears a nightgown at breakfast, don't cuss her. Congratulate her. I looked rather thoroughly at these nude women and believe me . . ."; in 1963, the film "Have Figure, Will Travel" chronicled the exploits of three bachelorettes on a yacht tour of the Eastern Seaboard's clothing-optional camps.) Together, Anton and her parents discussed the merits of participating. "My father said, 'Well, there will be a certain amount of notoriety. Do you want to do this?' " Anton said. "I slept on it and woke up and said yes."

The ensuing years of Anton's life have been, like anyone's, mundane and extraordinary: war protests, marriage, parenthood; pottery, medieval reënactments, health problems. For years, Anton kept her Arbus in a safe-deposit box, but when business debts mounted, in the nineties, she sold the print to a broker in San Francisco. (Last month, a print of the Anton portrait went for a hundred and thirty-eight thousand dollars at Sotheby's.) The Met show has got her thinking about the golden days of May's Landing. "I miss the wonderful environs of the park," she said. "It ran along the Great Egg Harbor River, a tidal river. The water was the color of root beer, from the cedar trees, and we were always finding arrowheads and axe heads and chips of flint, because the Lenni-Lenape Indians had lived along those banks. There was black clay along the banks. We used to goof around and rub our legs in it and say, 'Oh, I'm having a mud bath!' "

—*Lauren Collins*

JOE HELLER

True story, Word of Honor:
Joseph Heller, an important and funny writer
now dead,
and I were at a party given by a billionaire
on Shelter Island.
I said, "Joe, how does it make you feel
to know that our host only yesterday
may have made more money
than your novel 'Catch-22'
has earned in its entire history?"
And Joe said, "I've got something he can never have."
And I said, "What on earth could that be, Joe?"
And Joe said, "The knowledge that I've got enough."
Not bad! Rest in peace!

—*Kurt Vonnegut*

IN CHARACTER

DOMINGO'S NEW NOSE

In order to rehearse for his lead role in "Cyrano de Bergerac," which opens in a new production at the Met on May 13th, Plácido Domingo has been wearing, along with his street clothes, three items characteristic of the swashbuckling nobleman: a pair of cuffed boots; a sword, the silvery handle of which pokes out of his sports jacket; and a fake nose of proportions sufficient to be visible even in those far reaches of the opera house where performers' faces are flesh-colored blurs. "You have to see the problem of this man," Domingo explained the other day, as he sat in a dressing room after rehearsal, still in full nose. "But, on the other hand, it cannot be something that is laughable, something that is going to be grotesque."

Though very substantial in appearance, the fake nose, Domingo explained, is lightweight and easy to wear, with a custom fit around the nostrils. It is made from latex that has been painted in layers over a plaster mold, and so, although it appears to be rigid, it is actually hollow and pliable. (It can even be squeezed at its tip, like a child's rubber duck, as Domingo demonstrated, quacking twice.) Domingo has been wearing the nose for every rehearsal, and so far has been happy to discover that his performance is uncompromised. "The breathing seems fine, and the resonance, it seems, is there," he said. He has not, he said, been applying Method principles to his portrayal of Cyrano by wearing the nose when he is not onstage. "Why should I wear it on the street?" he said. "It is not Halloween, you know."

The nose he had been wearing for that particular rehearsal—about four inches in length, with a slight hump in the bridge and a turned-up tip—was the fourth iteration that had been created for him by Victor Callegari, the Met's chief makeup artist. Working from a plaster cast of Domingo's own nose, which required the tenor to dunk his nose in a viscous substance called alginate for a minute or two, Callegari initially made two noses that were shorter and more retroussé, somewhat suggestive of a crooked finger beck-

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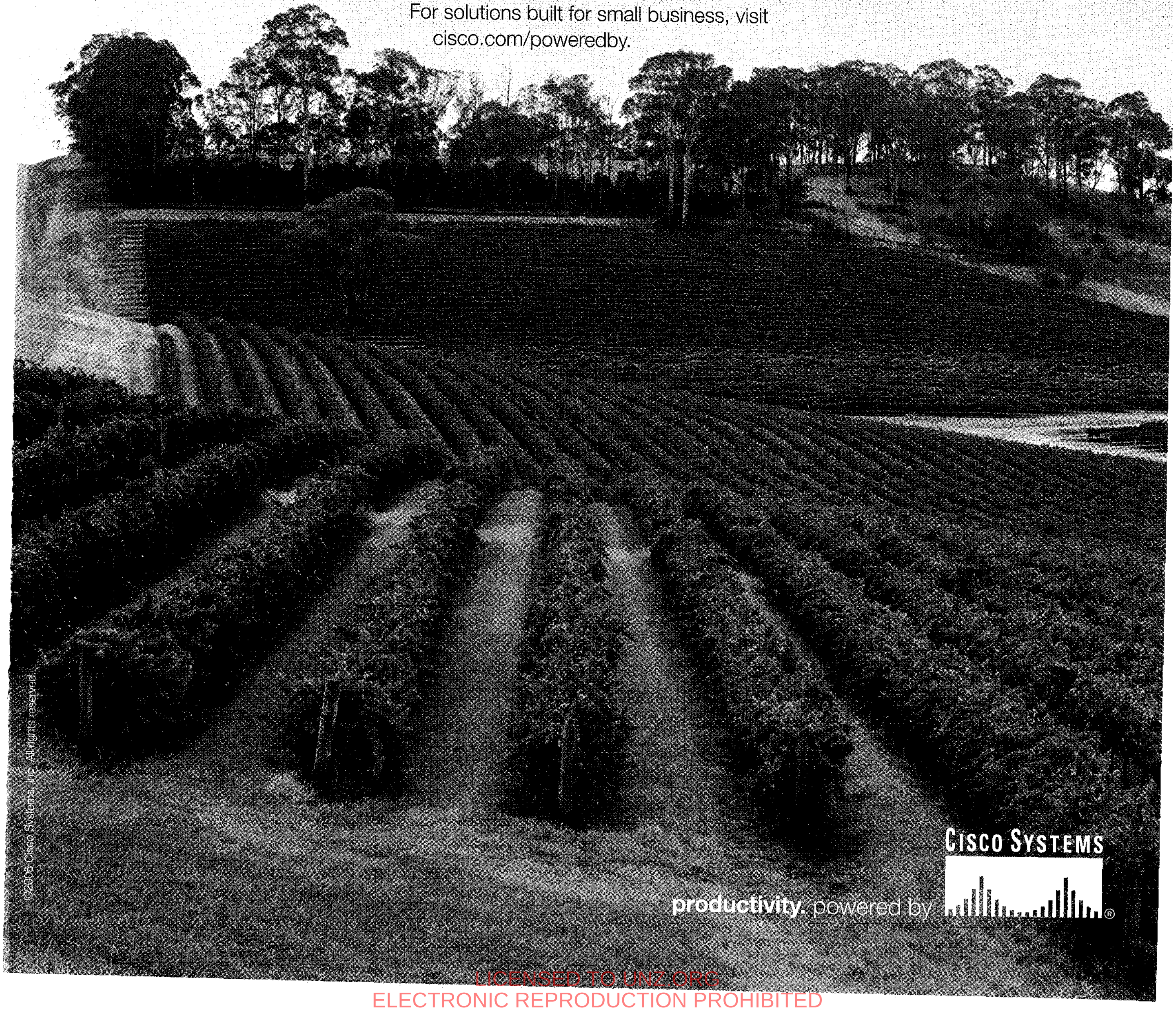

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ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

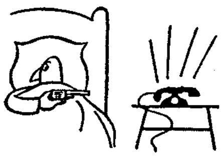
oning from the mid-facial region. For the third nose, he took a different direction, creating a hawklike proboscis, with a pronounced bridge and pointed tip, that Domingo deemed excessively "witchlike."

Domingo's facial dimensions, Callegari said, placed limits on his own nasal-engineering abilities. The space between the tenor's eyes and his mouth is proportionately on the short side. "But you have to work with what you have," Callegari said. "If I built it all the way up to his forehead, it would pop off while he was singing." As he waits for a nose that is up to snuff aesthetically, Domingo has time to reflect upon the tragedy of a hero brought low by self-consciousness. "He says, 'You know, I cannot fall in love even to an ugly girl, because you see this nose. Wherever I go, it arrives fifteen minutes before me,' " Domingo said. "He is very witty with the words, but it's a lot of bitterness."

With his own nose—which is no small appendage, with a bulbous end and a thickish bridge—Domingo said he had always been content. "I think I used to have a perfect nose," he said. "But when I did my first Otello in Hamburg, in 1975, with Maestro Levine conducting me, I wanted to sing one 'Tosca,' to try if I can sing a lighter repertory. I sang it very well, and in the scene in the second act, when they torture me, I had to scream, 'Victory, victory!' And then I do a very dramatic scene: I fall with my whole body onto the floor, but in this performance I fall onto my nose. It was so tremendous—everybody could see the blood. But I was lucky. I could actually have destroyed my nose, but it didn't happen anything." He touched the bridge of his nose with some tenderness. "It was just a little thicker here, and that was all."

—*Rebecca Mead*

TALKING BACK
THE DISCIPLINARIAN



Bob Watson, who is now fifty-nine, is a baseball lifer. After nineteen seasons as a big-league outfielder and first baseman, he turned to coaching, and then served for several seasons as the general manager of the Astros and the Yankees. Now he has a job befitting an elder statesman: chief disciplinarian for Major League Baseball. It is a job whose purpose, he says, is "to make people mad"—those people being, principally, the players, managers, and owners he has punished with fines and suspensions, but also their embittered fans. As a man of the old school, Watson has a natural forthrightness, and also a tendency to answer his own phone; the combination of these traits means that he sometimes finds himself arguing with complete strangers. For a lay equivalent, imagine a civilian getting Dick Cheney on the line to talk about our trade policy toward Taiwan.

James Devitt, a thirty-eight-year-old Red Sox fan from Larchmont, New York, and an employee at N.Y.U., is one such stranger. He was unhappy with the punishments meted out to several of Boston's players following a recent brawl between the Sox and the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. The Yankees' Gary Sheffield, meanwhile, had shoved a fan at Fenway Park last month and got no punishment at all. What gives? Devitt dialled the number for M.L.B., on Park Avenue, and asked for Bob Watson's office—and there, suddenly, Watson was. "So I just asked him to explain the discrepancy," Devitt said last week. Watson's response, which Devitt found "unsatisfactory," was that the two situations were unrelated, and not worthy of comparison. Devitt persisted: "So it's O.K. to shove a fan but it's not O.K. to react angrily to being thrown at?" Watson said, "I made my decision," and hung up.

"I was, like, This is silly," Devitt said. "This guy who I kind of admired hung up on me and was being somewhat dictatorial about his decision—although he was nice enough to take the call." Sometimes it's better not to take the call. Devitt riffled through his old baseball-card collection and wrote a follow-up letter to Watson. "I admired you as a player and as a pioneering Yankee executive," the letter said. "However, your decision and subsequent treatment of me on the phone caused a change of heart. I am therefore returning all of my Bob Watson cards, which date back to 1976. Also included is a Bob Watson card from my son's collection—he voluntarily gave it to me after I recounted the incident." Devitt's son is six. ("You know, I did this all on my lunch break, by the way," Devitt said. "Just so my supervisor doesn't think I'm slacking off.")

This was not, in fact, Devitt's first Watson experience. A couple of years ago, he heard his friend David Marks, who works at Columbia, call Watson to air his own complaints. Marks, who is an avid fantasy-baseball player, was annoyed that the Houston Astros pitcher Roy Oswalt, the linchpin of Marks's fantasy team, had been suspended for plunking a Chicago Cubs batter. The Cubs pitcher had hit a Houston batter yet had gone unpunished. The call, as Marks remembers it, went as follows: "He's, like, 'Lemme guess, you're an Astros fan,' sort of deflecting the subject. I said, 'Actually, no, I'm a Yankees fan.' He's, like, 'Well, what did you think when I suspended El Duque last week,' and I'm, like, 'Yeah, that was justified, because he hit two men, and he *should* be suspended.' He's, like, 'See, that's my point.' I'm, like, '*What's* your point? There's another guy who hit someone who wasn't suspended.' I could tell he was getting frustrated. I took the high road and said, 'O.K., Mr. Watson, thank you for your time.' He didn't say goodbye. He just hung up." Marks was unimpressed with the disciplinarian's debating skills. Still, he said, "I probably will call Bob Watson again."

Watson, for his part, was travelling last week, so he didn't answer his phone, but when he called back he said that he hadn't yet received Devitt's forsaken baseball cards. He said that he likes to be cordial—"If I have the time, I'll sit and talk to you"—but that he's never heard a persuasive argument from a fan about punitive matters. "Sometimes fans call with some good ideas about the pace of the game or about uniform codes, the way guys dress today," he said. "They have some good input there, but on discipline? No."

He went on, "There's a ton of people who are offended by the way the Red Sox look—'They're the world champions and they look like slobs.' Well, I hear you loud and clear." He also said that, whatever grief he gets from angry sports nuts, being baseball's disciplinarian beats answering to George Steinbrenner, who used to call him all the time during his tenure as the G.M. "That's why I'm sitting here talking to you," he said.

—*Ben McGrath*

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THE FINANCIAL PAGE
HELLO, CLEVELAND

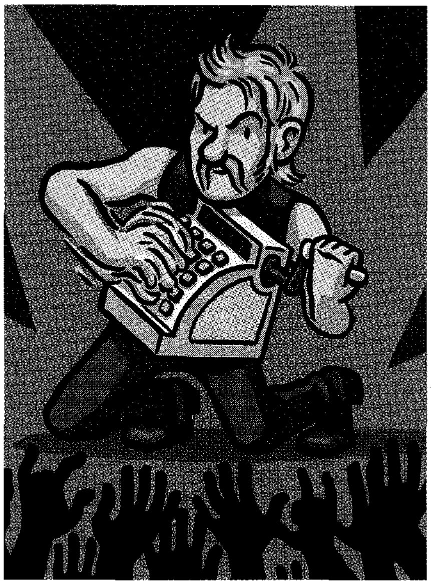
In the summer of 1924, a Kansas City band called the Coon-Sanders Original Nighthawk Orchestra did something unusual: it went on tour. Popular as live music was, bands in those days tended to serve as house orchestras or to play long stands in local clubs; there was hardly even a road to go on. But Jules Stein, a booking agent from Chicago, convinced the Nighthawk Orchestra that it could make more money by playing a different town every night. The tour, which lasted five weeks, was a smash. Soon, bands all over the country were hitting the road to play ballrooms and dance halls.

Stein's original vision hasn't changed much, despite some modifications over the years—parking lots, hair spray, the disposable lighter. Consider Metallica, the Coon-Sanders Original Nighthawk Orchestra of our day. Though Metallica *still* sells a fair number of CDs from its back catalogue (it has made just one album in the past six years), it makes most of its money from concerts. Two years ago, the band brought in almost fifty million dollars with its Sanitarium tour. Last year, it brought in sixty million with its Madly in Anger with the World tour. God knows what it would take to make Metallica happy.

The music industry may be in crisis, what with illegal file-sharing, stagnant CD sales, and the decline of commercial rock radio, but the touring business is as sturdy as ever. In some ways, it is healthier than some of the mediums (radio, recorded music) that at one point or another were supposed to render it obsolete. Since 1998, annual concert-tour revenue has more than doubled, while CD sales have remained essentially flat. Last year, thirteen different artists grossed more than forty million dollars each at the box office. (Prince made eighty-seven million.) Consumers who seem reluctant to spend nineteen dollars for a CD apparently have few qualms about spending a hundred bucks or more to see a show.

There are still artists who make huge sums of money selling records, but they are the lucky few. A longtime recording-industry rule of thumb holds that just one in ten artists makes money from royalties. Today, it's probably less than that. So the best model, if you're in it for the money, may be the Grateful Dead. Although the Dead didn't sell many records or get much airplay, they worked the big stadiums and arenas long enough and often enough to become one of the most profitable bands out there. As in politics and sales, nothing beats meeting the people face to face.

Most musicians, from a business perspective, at least, would wish it otherwise. Selling CDs is, as economists say, scalable: you make one recording, and you can sell it to an unlimited number of people for an unlimited amount of time, at very little cost. A tour, on the other hand, is work. You have to perform nearly every night, before a limited number of people, for hours at a time. You can knock a few seconds off each song, fire a percussionist, or sell more T-shirts, but in the end efficiencies are hard to come by.



The trick is that musicians get a much higher percentage of the money from concerts and merchandise than they do from the sale of their CDs. An artist, if he's lucky, gets twelve per cent of the retail price of a CD. But he doesn't get any royalties until everything is paid for—studio time, packaging costs, videos—which means that he can sell a million records and make almost nothing. On tour, though, he often gets more than half of the box-office, so even if he grosses less he can profit more.

Traditionally, tours were a means of promoting a record. Today, the record promotes the tour. The decline in record sales has shrunk the size of the pie for labels and artists to fight over, so they've had to find new ways to make money, and artists have come to see how lucrative touring can be, given what people will pay to see them live. (Ticket prices for the top hundred tours doubled between 1995 and 2003.) And, while high prices may be starting to put a dent in attendance, the dollars keep pouring in. Last summer's concert season was considered a dismal one, yet, according to *Pollstar*, the industry's trade magazine, concert revenues rose for the year.

Inevitably, touring rewards some artists better than others—graying superstars, for example, with their deep-pocketed baby-boomer fans and set lists full of sing-along hits. The economist Alan Krueger has estimated that the top one per cent of performers claim more than half of all concert revenues. But even indie rockers are reaping the benefits, with bands like Wilco and Modest Mouse selling out venues like Radio City Music Hall, at decidedly non-indie prices.

The upshot is that the fortunes of musicians and the fortunes of music labels have less and less to do with each other. This may be the first stage of what John Perry Barlow, a former lyricist for the Dead, once called the shift from "the music business" to "the musician business." In the musician business, the assets that once made the major labels so important—promotion, distribution, shelf space—matter less than the assets that belong to the artists, such as their ability to perform live. As technology has grown more sophisticated, the ways in which artists make money have grown more old-fashioned. The value of songs falls, and the value of seeing an artist sing them rises, because that experience can't really be reproduced. It's funny that, in an era of file-sharing and iPod-stealing, the old troubadour may have the most lucrative gig of all. But then Metallica knew it all along. "Send me money, send me green," the group sang in "Leper Messiah," twenty years ago. "Make a contribution, and you'll get a better seat."

—*James Surowiecki*

Jess Jackson — Adobe House, Alexander Valley

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Jess S Jackson

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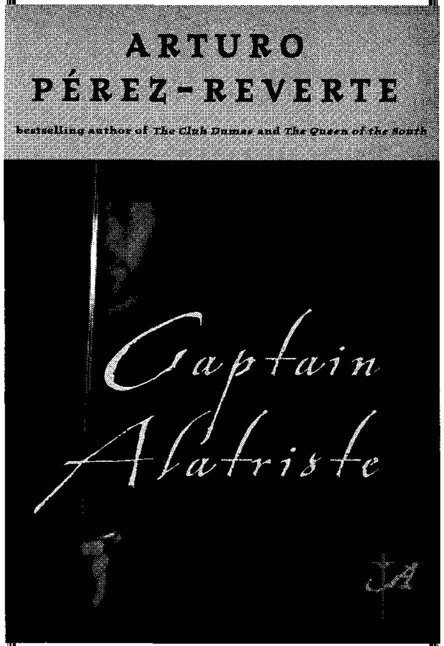
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THE POLITICAL SCENE

THE UPSTART

Manhattan's legendary D.A. faces a tough challenger.

BY JEFFREY TOOBIN

At almost every campaign appearance in the race for Manhattan District Attorney, Leslie Crocker Snyder talks about how she came to prosecute murder cases. In 1968, when she was twenty-five, she joined the staff of Frank Hogan, who was then the D.A., and quickly mastered the basics of her job, but soon found her progress stymied. "I kept asking Mr. Hogan to go to the homicide bureau, which was a big bastion of male chauvinism at the time," Snyder recalls, "and he kept putting me off, saying I should do consumer affairs, which is where the few women in the office tended to go. And then finally one day I said, 'You know, come on, it's really time, Mr. Hogan.' And he said, 'Well, if you bring me a letter of permission from your husband.' "

When the audience laughter dies down, Snyder always adds that even though she never actually produced such a letter, she still went on to prosecute homicide cases. But the people who come out to Democratic clubs and civic organizations where Snyder is making the rounds sometimes miss the point. Hogan, who took office in 1941, succeeding Thomas E. Dewey, was already old and out of touch by the time Snyder asked for her chance to move up. "By the mid-seventies, things had changed totally," Snyder said recently. "That's when we started to have women in law school, and that's when women started to come into the D.A.'s office in real numbers." In 1973, when Hogan was running for what turned out to be his final term, he would mention that there was a woman in his office trying felony cases—Leslie Crocker Snyder.

Snyder grew up in Baltimore; her father was a professor of literature at Goucher College, and her mother a homemaker. She's been married for thirty-seven years to Fredric Snyder, a successful pediatrician, and they have two grown children; one works in the foreign service and the other in finance. Throughout her career, Snyder has gone after the opportunities that were becoming available to women of her generation. She left the D.A.'s office in 1976—about two years after the new District Attorney, Robert Morgenthau, arrived—and soon applied for a criminal-court judgeship. As a prosecutor, she "ably performed to the satisfaction of her supervisors," Morgenthau wrote to the mayor's commission on judicial selection on June 9, 1978. "Mrs. Snyder has a pleasing presence and is well-spoken." It wasn't until 1983, however, that she was named to the criminal court, by Mayor Ed Koch. She spent the next two decades on the bench, often seeking out difficult trials. She retired last year and joined Kasowitz, Benson, Torres & Friedman, a firm of about a hundred and fifty lawyers that specializes in litigation.

Among the few decorations in Snyder's law office is a laminated front page of the *Post*—"KILL THE JUDGE"—from the time a defendant put out a contract on her life. Snyder's style as a judge was pugnacious and led defense lawyers (and their clients) to give her nicknames like Ice Princess and Judge 232, for a sentence she once imposed. (The actual sentence was 213 years.) In a tribute of sorts, one local drug gang distributed bags of heroin stamped with her likeness and the words "25 to Life," and Snyder, in turn, proudly used those words as the title of an autobiography she wrote in 2002.

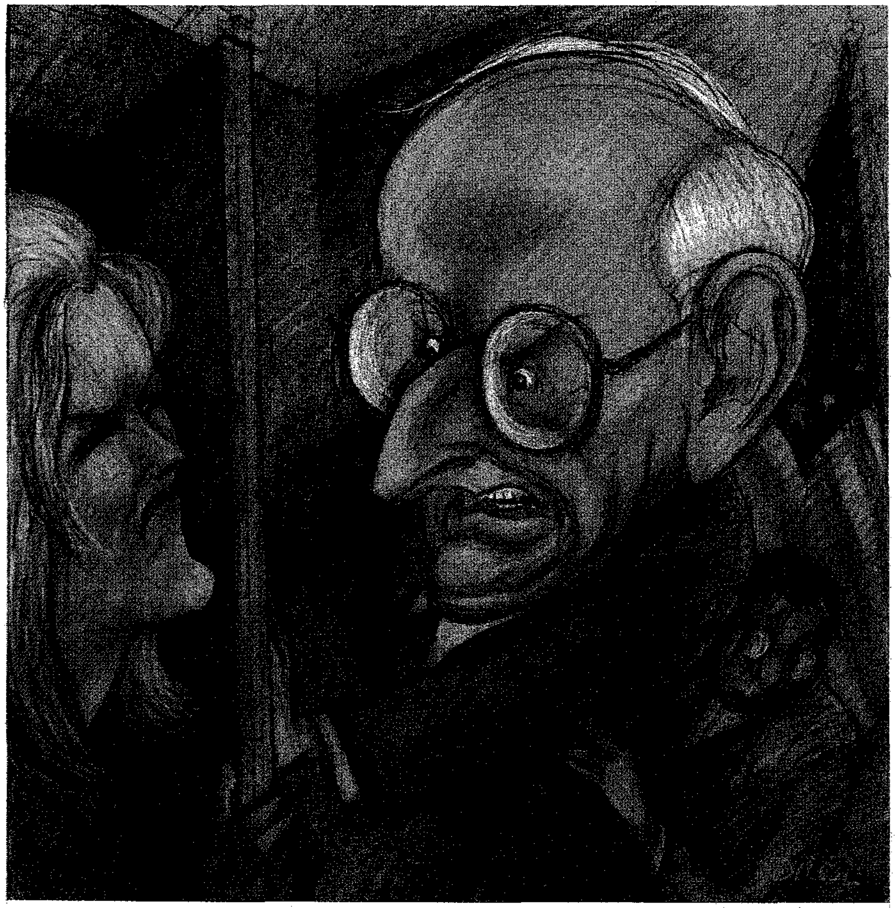
While Snyder was still a judge, she became a frequent television commentator on legal cases, including the murder trial of O. J. Simpson, and, to an unusual degree, made herself the center of attention inside the courtroom as well. When Bruce Cutler, the lawyer for the late mobster John Gotti, represented another organized-crime figure in a case before her, she grew so annoyed with Cutler that, out of the presence of the jury, she said to him, "If you want to bullshit me, then look me in the eye and do it." At bench conferences, she even registered her distaste for Cutler's cologne. "During the trial, she bought me some toilet water, nice stuff, because she didn't like the Grey Flannel I was wearing," Cutler recalled. (Despite the change in scent, Cutler's client was convicted.) "She's very smart, gave me a very fair trial, but, boy, she's harsh on the sentences," Cutler said. "She gave everybody the maximum." Because of her reputed harshness, Snyder was often the judge favored by Morgenthau's prosecutors, and "judge shopping" formed the basis of a recent appeal by a defendant convicted in her court. The U.S. Court of Appeals said that the practice of letting prosecutors choose judges "raises serious concerns," but still affirmed the conviction. Other defendants have challenged her combativeness—for instance, she called a defense witness "full of baloney." But Snyder never had a conviction overturned on that ground.

Four years ago, Snyder thought about quitting her judgeship and running against Morgenthau. "I wanted to do it then," she told me, "but, out of respect for him, I decided to wait until the next time. I thought there was no way he was going to run again—when he was eighty-six—but I was wrong. He did decide to run again, and this time I wasn't going to wait."

Ever since Snyder left the bench, her law office, on Broadway at Fiftieth Street, has been a staging area for her campaign to take charge of the District Attorney's office. The D.A.'s office prosecutes about a hundred thousand cases each year, and has a staff of five hundred lawyers, a support staff of seven hundred, and a budget of some sixty-five million dollars. Snyder has been a more or less full-time candidate for almost a year, with occasional appearances on cable television to offer commentary on such events as the trial of Scott Peterson. Amid the clutter on her desk is a tiny American flag and a marble paperweight in the shape of a baseball, bearing the inscription "Sometimes you just have to play hardball."

First elected in 1974, Morgenthau is now seeking his ninth term in an office that he has come to embody, perhaps even more than Hogan and Dewey did for earlier generations. Having spent a decade as U.S. Attorney before his election to the D.A.'s office, Morgenthau is approaching a half century as a top prosecutor in New York. He has outlasted dozens of subordinates who might have run to succeed him, including Linda Fairstein, who ran the D.A.'s high-profile sex-crimes unit for more than two decades and is now a best-selling novelist; and Eliot Spitzer, an assistant district attorney from 1986 to 1992, who won election as state attorney general in 1998 and is now running for governor. "I have a high regard for Snyder," Ed Koch says. "I appointed her a judge. But I am for Morgenthau. This man is the premier justice figure in the country."

Morgenthau's network of former prosecutors is loyal in the extreme. "One of the most profoundly rewarding aspects of working for Bob was that he always said the same thing whenever I brought him a hard problem," Fairstein said. "He said, 'Do what you think is right.' I heard it over and over again." Spitzer says, "He's a great public servant and a great man." Robert Morvillo, who was an assistant U.S. attorney under Morgenthau and who then became a successful defense lawyer—his clients have included Martha Stewart—is only slightly more restrained, saying, "I think Leslie is a formidable candidate. She is bright, personable, diligent, and clearly capable of running that office, but I don't think that there is anything that warrants change at this point. Given Morgenthau's contribution to law enforcement in general, I would kind of hope that people would cut him the benefit of the doubt on the age issue." Snyder, however, will not. She is sixty-three and insists that her time is now. "People say he's an icon, but I don't care," she told me. "He's the district attorney of the past, and I'm the district attorney of the future."


Leslie Crocker Snyder has not made an issue of Robert Morgenthau's age.

EDWARD SOREL

On a recent Sunday afternoon, Morgenthau and Snyder showed up at the Arte Café, an Italian restaurant on the Upper West Side, for the annual party of a local club called the Community Free Democrats. In overwhelmingly Democratic Manhattan—John Kerry took eighty-one per cent of the vote—the race for District Attorney will be decided in the Party primary on Septem-

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—*Charles Simic*

ber 13th, so both candidates have been shuttling among the twenty or so Democratic clubs scattered around town. Snyder arrived at the restaurant first, made a quick circuit around the room, and left, having been largely ignored by the attendees. Even when Morgenthau was running unopposed, as was usually the case, he always stopped by the clubs, and that loyalty has been rewarded. This is his crowd. Morgenthau is hard of hearing, and in these settings he braves the ambient noise, puts on a fixed smile, sticks out his hand, and announces "Good to see ya" to anyone who crosses his path. The restaurant was full of assemblymen and state senators who might have run against Morgenthau if they thought he was vulnerable. But none of these elected officials betrayed any on-the-record concern about Morgenthau's health, political or otherwise. "The only way Leslie has a chance is if people think he's too old," Jerrold Nadler, the Upper West Side's man in Congress, said over the cheery din.

After about half an hour, Morgenthau left. He boarded an S.U.V., and his driver headed downtown to the Museum of Jewish Heritage, for a ceremony honoring a town in the Dominican Republic that took in refugees from the Holocaust. It was an ideal political double play in a borough with a great many Jewish and Dominican voters.

Morgenthau comes from one of the nation's most distinguished Jewish families. Henry Morgenthau, Sr., the youngest of fourteen children, emigrated from Germany in 1866, went through the city's public schools, and ultimately made a fortune in real estate. He also began the Morgenthau tradition of public service, as Woodrow Wilson's Ambassador to Turkey. Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Robert's father, was Secretary of the Treasury from 1934 to 1945, almost the duration of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Presidency. As the family's scion, Robert Morgenthau has made New York his domain. In addition to being D.A., he chairs the Jewish Heritage Museum's board of directors and has served as a trustee of Temple Emanu-El, the citadel of German Jewry, on Fifth Avenue.

At the museum, Morgenthau showed me around an exhibit on the role of American Jews in the armed forces during the Second World War. As he stared through the picture windows overlooking New York Harbor, he said, "This place means a lot to me, because when I was in the Navy we led convoys across the Atlantic and came back right this way, past Fort Lafayette, in Brooklyn. Many years later, I went looking for Fort Lafayette, and I couldn't even find it on a map. What the hell happened to it? Am I losing my mind? Then I found out it was torn down to make room for the Brooklyn side of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge." The Germans sank one of Morgenthau's ships in the Mediterranean, and Japanese kamikazes attacked another in the Pacific. The noise from shelling cost Morgenthau much of his hearing.

Morgenthau, who rose to the rank of Lieutenant Commander, was never exactly an ordinary seaman. "In 1942, we pulled into Charleston for repairs and I went on home leave to our farm in Dutchess County," Morgenthau said. "F.D.R. had brought Churchill there for a meeting. F.D.R. liked my mint juleps, so I made them for both of them. Churchill kept asking me what I thought about the Battle of Midway. I'd just gotten off a ship, where I was completely cut off from all news. I didn't know a goddam thing about the Battle of Midway."

After the war, Morgenthau attended Yale Law School; he graduated in 1948, and in the nineteen-fifties he worked for an old-line New York law firm, Patterson, Belknap & Webb. A friend from Yale, Byron (Whizzer) White, eventually provided the start for his political career, recruiting him to organize the Bronx for John F. Kennedy's Presidential campaign. White served as Robert Kennedy's deputy in the Justice Department (before being named to the Supreme Court, in 1962). White and R.F.K. persuaded the President to name Morgenthau U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, a job that remains the great prosecutorial plum of the federal government.

Morgenthau's days as U.S. Attorney, which lasted from 1961 until 1970, remain the most vivid and successful period of his professional life. He pioneered the criminal investigations that have been a hallmark of that office ever since, notably under such successors as Rudolph Giuliani and Mary Jo White. Morgenthau prosecuted an early generation of stock swindlers, opened up Swiss bank secrecy laws, and went after a variety of crooked politicians, many of them Democrats. "That was the first office that started a securities-fraud unit, which is now the fashionable thing known as white-collar crime," Stephen Kaufman, who was chief of the criminal division under Morgenthau, said. "Bob is offended by unfairness, and has an old-fashioned sense of rectitude, especially about people who should know better."

Cases against the well-off and the well-defended have been touchstones of Morgenthau's career—and Morgenthau has set his assistant district attorneys to work on the same kinds of cases he prosecuted as U.S. Attorney. This focus on white-collar crime—a traditional province of federal prosecutors—is at the heart of Snyder's critique. "Morgenthau has said that he spends almost half his budget on white-collar cases, and that's too much," Snyder said when we talked at her campaign headquarters, a mostly empty loft-style office near the entrance to the Holland Tunnel. (The D.A.'s office says the figure is closer to a quarter.) Snyder insists that most of those cases belong in federal court, adding, "The feds have much sounder legal jurisdiction and a better budget to do it. And they can often do it better. Those cases really haven't gone very well for the Manhattan D.A.'s office." Snyder would take the money from white-collar investigations and use it to send prosecutors into schools and community centers to mentor young people.

As U.S. Attorney, Morgenthau won virtually all of his important cases (except, notably, prosecutions of the right-wing lawyer Roy Cohn). His tenure as D.A., though, has included several embarrassing setbacks in major white-collar prosecutions. After the collapse, in 1991, of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, which was based in the Cayman Islands and controlled by Middle Eastern investors, Morgenthau charged Clark Clifford, the Washington lawyer-lobbyist and former Secretary of Defense, and Clifford's partner, Robert A. Altman, with lying about whether they knew that B.C.C.I. had financed a Washington bank they controlled. Altman was acquitted after a five-month trial, and all charges were dropped against Clifford, because of his age—eighty-six—and ill health. Likewise, Morgenthau's ardent pursuit of the leaders of Tyco, the Bermuda-based conglomerate, has yielded little so far. The first prosecution of Dennis Kozlowski, Tyco's former, spendthrift C.E.O., ended in a mistrial; a second trial is now under way. The case against Mark Belnick, Tyco's general

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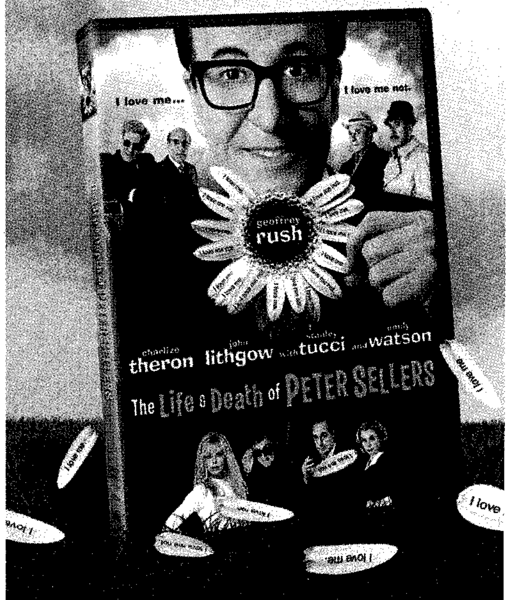

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counsel, concluded with a vindication of the defendant.

In part because of his interest in white-collar cases, Morgenthau has fought a series of vicious turf wars with federal prosecutors, especially Mary Jo White, the U.S. Attorney from 1993 to 2002. (During the most bizarre of these battles, on December 3, 1997, James M. Kindler, Morgenthau's chief assistant, went into federal court to ask the judge to refuse a guilty plea from a defendant in a securities-fraud case. He said that White's office was trying to "thwart our investigation, to stop our prosecution" in a related case. The judge rebuffed Kindler and accepted the plea.) "You have two of the finest law-enforcement offices in the world two blocks from each other," White, who is now a partner at the law firm of Debevoise & Plimpton, says. White is known for measuring her words to the point of blandness, but she has enthusiastically endorsed Snyder and is the chairwoman of Snyder for New York. Of her relationship with Morgenthau, White says, "I don't think our bumps in the road were unusual for those two offices—less than some, more than others. As Leslie thinks about her own priorities, she wants a more coöperative relationship."

Snyder says that she wants closer ties between federal and state anti-terrorism officials, too. "The federal authorities are on the front lines on terrorism, and we've now got a Police Commissioner, Ray Kelly, who has done a great job of coördinating his operation with Washington," Snyder said. "But Morgenthau doesn't coöperate. He is obsessed by international white-collar cases and terrorism investigations that he shouldn't be doing. I am not going to send my assistant district attorneys to Venezuela at taxpayer expense for cases that are tenuous legally, that the feds could do better."

When I visited Morgenthau at his office, I asked about his interest in these far-flung investigations. He has perhaps the biggest office in New York; it's on the eighth floor of an Art Deco tower called Hogan Place, a few blocks north of City Hall. The room is about forty feet long, with three desks and a conference table, all piled high with papers. Dozens of plaques line the windowsills and baseboards, and framed memorabilia, with a special emphasis on F.D.R. and the Navy, cover most of the wood-panelled walls. Visitors are ushered in to see "the Boss," as Morgenthau is known here, by his assistant, Ida Van Lindt, who has worked for him since he started as District Attorney, and who spent the previous seventeen years in a similar role with Frank Hogan.

"We're spending a lot of time on money-laundering terrorists," he said. "Something we can't, you know, talk about too much, but I'm very concerned about these terrorist organizations. So we're going after the money-movement stuff." He called the process "a slow business," and added cryptically, "I've had people down in Paraguay, because, you know, there's a big radical group down there. Hezbollah's big in Paraguay. So people talk about turf wars. I mean, what we're trying to do is fill in the gaps for people who aren't doing anything."

When it comes to these complex terror-related investigations, Morgenthau is prone to Delphic insinuation. "We're very concerned about the widespread use of offshore accounts—there is more than a trillion dollars on account in the Cayman Islands," he recently told the Park River Independent Democrats, who seemed baffled by the revelation. "We've been trying to trace those funds."

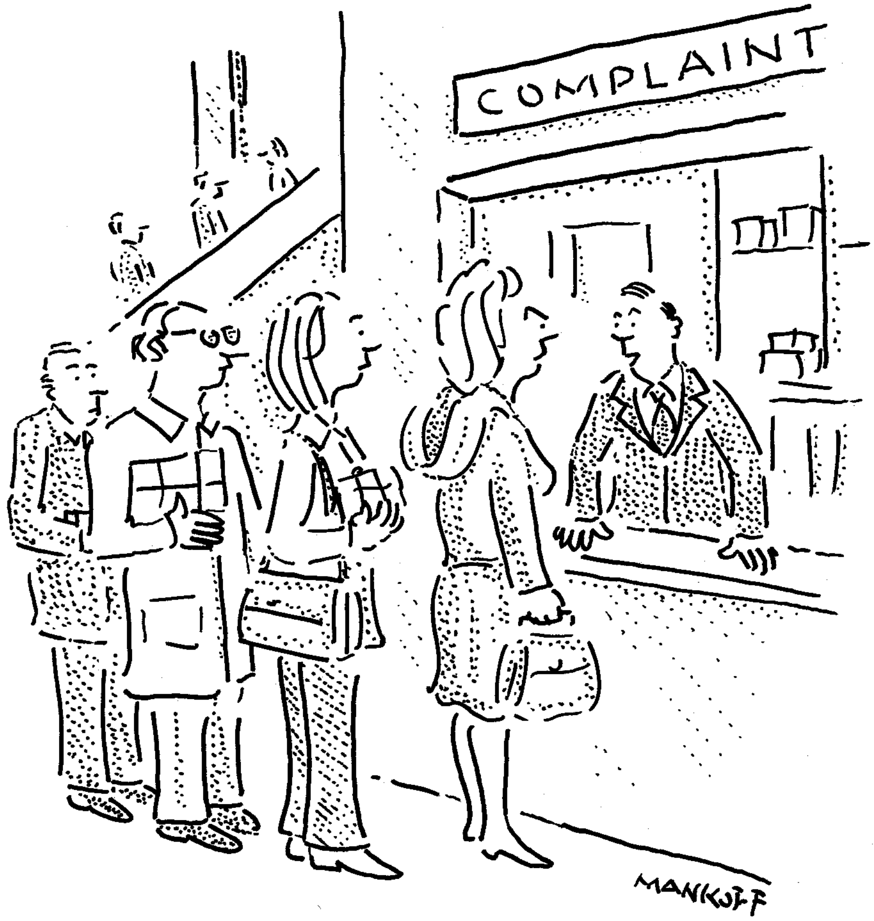
Morgenthau has an almost unlimited faith in his ability to wrestle complex investigations into manageable trials and eventual convictions. At one point, he told me, with apparent seriousness, that the only reason he couldn't prosecute Osama bin Laden was that it would cause traffic tie-ups. "If we made a case against one of the major figures, we'd have to turn it over to the United States Attorney's office, because we don't have the facilities," he said. "I mean, if we try one of those cases, the traffic would be backed up to Fourteenth Street and down to the Battery."

When the two candidates recently appeared side by side at the local office of the National Organization for Women, Snyder did her best to accentuate the age difference between them, without ever saying directly that Morgenthau was too old for the job. Snyder looks the part of a corporate lawyer and stands to answer questions. Morgenthau remains seated. When Morgenthau indicated that he couldn't hear several questions, Snyder rolled her eyes. Snyder walks at a breakneck pace, while Morgenthau has a painfully slow shuffle.

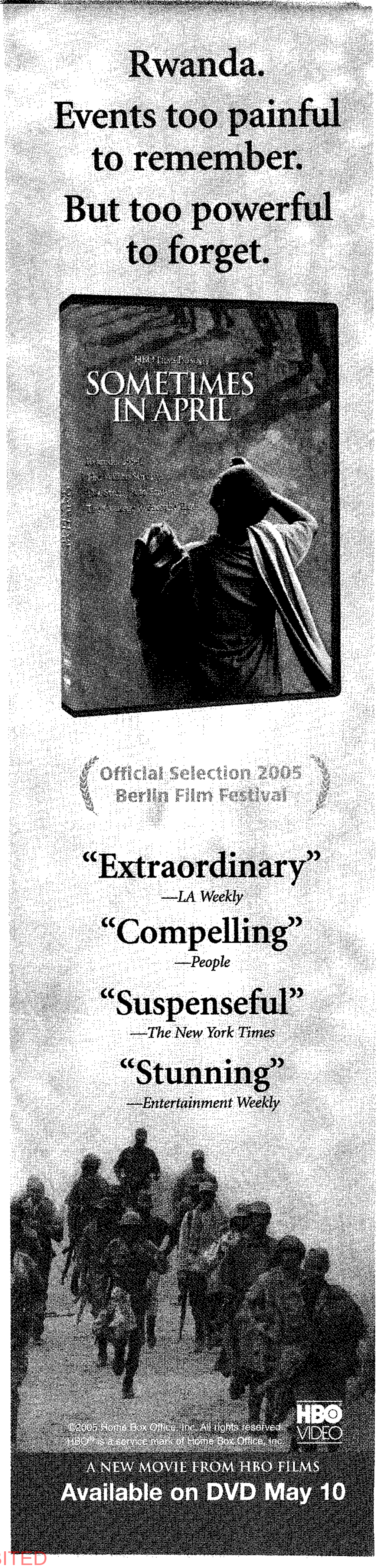
Morgenthau, though, seems comfortable with his age. (The first line of his biography on the D.A.'s Web site reads, "Robert Morris Morgenthau was born on July 31, 1919, in New York City.") Not long ago, he recalled his fondness for taking the elevated train on Columbus Avenue, near his boyhood home, on Eighty-first Street; the line shut down in 1940. Morgenthau doesn't pretend to any familiarity with popular culture, but he doesn't need to. "Women's rights have always been very important to me," he told the group at NOW. "On a personal note, my mother was a close friend of Eleanor Roosevelt."

Because of his fixation on white-collar crime, in these campaign appearances Morgenthau neglects a subject that most district attorneys would embrace as a singular accomplishment: violent crime in Manhattan has plummeted in the past thirty years. The number of homicides in the city is the lowest since 1963, and the current murder rate in Manhattan is the lowest since formal record-keeping began, in 1937. Since 1975, robberies have fallen by eighty-three per cent, forcible rapes by seventy-one per cent, and felonious assaults by fifty-seven per cent. Crime has fallen faster and farther in Manhattan than in any other borough.

Still, it's questionable how much credit Morgenthau deserves for this transformation. Crime began falling during the David Dinkins years and plunged under Mayor Giuliani, when William Bratton, as Police Commissioner, introduced a series of innovations, like Comstat, which required precinct commanders to measure and take responsibility for crime in their districts. "The reality is that, like the city itself, the reduction in crime was a complex thing, and there were many causes," Bratton, who is now the police chief in Los Angeles, said. Bratton, whose relationship with Morgenthau was rarely smooth, found Morgenthau less than willing to adopt new strategies. "Bob's office had a multiple focus, and there was a lot of interest in his interna-



"Look, I'm not denying the validity of your grievances. I just think they'd be better addressed at home, Helen."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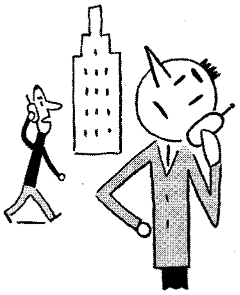
tional cases," Bratton said. "White-collar cases sucked up a lot of resources. Oftentimes, it did take a little more cajoling to get those types of efforts"—new police strategies—"to move forward than in other boroughs."

For his part, Morgenthau has an idiosyncratic explanation for the decline in violent crime, one that seems to reflect his relative lack of interest in the issue. "One of the things that I give some credit to is the Police Athletic League," he said, citing an after-school program that he has long supported. "I mean, we greatly expanded our programs. We now have seventy thousand boys and girls in PAL." Founded in 1914, PAL is a popular program, underwritten by a mixture of city funds and private contributions, but few people ascribe great crime-fighting significance to it. Some of Bratton's subordinates take a harsher view of Morgenthau's role. "Morgenthau was anti-progress in our day," a high-ranking police official during the Giuliani years, who insisted on anonymity, told me. "We went to Brooklyn and Queens, and they embraced technology and change, and we cut the time from arrest to arraignment by a third. In Manhattan, they fought any attempt to change things, to streamline things. They dug their feet in and said, 'That's not how we do things here.' "



From afar, Bratton is supporting Snyder, who presided at his wedding in 2001. "As good a job as Bob has done over the years, there comes a point in time in any organization, no matter how well run, that new ideas, new initiatives, and new players are needed," he said. "As a personality, as a woman, as a judge, Leslie is remarkable in all those areas. I'm somebody who has been described as a change agent. So is she."

Morgenthau's detractors do give him credit for curbing the violence that beset Manhattan during the crack epidemic of the late nineteen-eighties and early nineties. "Morgenthau set up the Homicide Investigation Unit, and H.I.U. was a phenomenal success in taking out the drug gangs that had taken over large parts of upper Manhattan," the former senior police official said. "These gangs, like the Wild Cowboys and the Jheri Curls, were like murder factories, and getting them off the street did a tremendous amount to make the city safer." And yet even those cases have become something of a mixed blessing for Morgenthau's campaign, because the judge who presided over them was Leslie Crocker Snyder.

Snyder says that her time on the bench suggests the kind of district attorney she will be. One day, while being driven to a campaign appearance, she reminisced about the Jheri Curls trial, in 1993. "The Jheri Curls shaved half their heads and had permed curls on the rest," she said. "They called this guy Rafi 'the father.' A super in one of the buildings in the blocks they controlled in Washington Heights had the guts to try to stop them from dealing, and Rafi ordered one of his people to take the super into the middle of the block and assassinate him in broad daylight. Nice, huh?

"So at one point while the jury is out, they bring in Lenny Sepulveda, who is a leader of the Wild Cowboys, to be arraigned in front of me," she continued. "He rolls in, and he's got the typical street macho thing going. He thinks he's still on the street. And when I remand him, he says, 'Fuck this!' as he was being brought into the pen. Now, one thing I never allowed in my courtroom was to be treated with disrespect by anyone. So I told them to bring him back in here. I told him, 'You may be king on the street, but you're going to learn to behave yourself in here, or you'll watch your trial from your cell and I'll just pipe in the sound,' which I had the right to do. I never had a problem with him again. Meanwhile, there was a couple waiting to get married in the courtroom. I think they may have been former jurors of mine. I've married a lot of my former jurors. And I say to them, 'Are you sure you want to do this right here?' I mean, there was a lot going on. But they said no, let's go ahead, and so I came down from the bench and married them. As I recall, it was her second marriage and his third, so they just wanted to get it done."

Snyder's vaunted toughness, though, may not be what the Manhattan electorate wants. The combination of the borough's pervasive liberalism and the reduced fear of crime makes this election resemble a reverse image of a typical race for prosecutor. Morgenthau spends much of his time boasting about people he wouldn't prosecute (like most of the protesters arrested at the Republican National Convention) and advocating lower sentences for the ones he did (including many narcotics offenders). He has one tested applause line: "I am very concerned that there is not enough money to get people into drug treatment when we're wasting thirty million dollars a year on the death penalty, which I have always opposed." (The death penalty was reinstated in 1995, but the state Court of Appeals last year effectively struck down the statute.) Snyder supports the death penalty, and at Party events she invariably draws hostile questions on the subject. Even though the death penalty is likely to remain off the books indefinitely and is not a real issue, her support for the *idea* of executions remains a political liability in Manhattan.

To change the subject, and to demonstrate that she's not really so bloodthirsty, Snyder always returns to the so-called Palladium case. In 1990, two bouncers were shot—one of them was killed—during a melee in front of the Palladium, a night club on East Fourteenth Street. Two years later, two men were tried and convicted of the crimes, and sentenced to twenty-five years to life. The two apparently didn't know each other—one, David Lemus, spoke only English and the other, Olmedo Hidalgo, only Spanish—but the jury believed eyewitness testimony that tied them to the crimes. In 1995, a federal prosecutor was interviewing a witness in an unrelated case when the witness confessed that he and another man had murdered the bouncer. The witness said that Lemus and Hidalgo had had nothing to do with it.

The prosecutor, Steven Cohen, reported the confession to lawyers in the D.A.'s office, who said that they would look into it. Ten years later, the D.A.'s office is still looking into it, even as more evidence has surfaced pointing to the innocence of Lemus and Hidalgo. Last year, the D.A.'s office issued a progress report to the state Division of Criminal Justice Services stating, "Substantial new evidence indicates that Lemus and Hidalgo were NOT involved in the homicide." Then, in late March, fifteen years after the crime but just a few weeks after Snyder started raising the issue in the campaign, a Manhattan grand jury indicted Thomas Morales, who was named by Cohen's source, as the gunman in the Palladium murder.

The case has come to resemble the kind of justice associated with stereotypical Southern sheriffs, rather than with the Manhattan District Attorney. Morgenthau's office now appears to be advocating conflicting versions of the same crime—prosecuting Morales in one courtroom and opposing Lemus and Hidalgo's bid for a new trial in another. Morgenthau refuses to discuss the merits of the Palladium case, because it is being litigated. "Most of the stuff that they"—the defendants—"are raising is information that we provided them with," he said. "And two judges have already looked into it and rejected their claims. But we're still looking into the case." Steven Cohen, who is now in private practice, says, "What the D.A. has done in this case is an outrage. They know these men are innocent, and yet they refuse even to give them a new trial." According to Snyder, "This case shows what happens when an office gets no scrutiny for twenty, thirty years. You get complacent, and you get this kind of result."

Snyder sees the same complacency in Morgenthau's handling of the notorious Central Park jogger case. On the evening of April 19, 1989, a young investment banker was raped and beaten nearly to death while jogging in Central Park. Several other people were also attacked in the Park that night. In the following days, police and prosecutors from Morgenthau's office interrogated a group of teen-agers, all of them black or Hispanic. Their statements were the key evidence in trials the following year, which ended with the conviction of five defendants. In the course of the trials, police disclosed that semen found on the jogger had not been linked to any of the defendants.

In 2002, a convicted rapist named Matias Reyes came forward in prison to say that he had raped the jogger, and had done so alone. DNA tests showed that the semen was his. Morgenthau asked

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Nancy Ryan, a senior aide, to lead a re-investigation of the jogger case, and in December the District Attorney consented to the dismissal of all charges against every defendant in the case. He did so without requiring Reyes to testify in public about whether he had acted alone.

Many in the Police Department, along with Linda Fairstein, who supervised the prosecution, thought that Ryan, and thus Morgenthau, had capitulated unnecessarily. Fairstein has said that although Reyes "completed the assault," she had no doubt that the others were involved. A police review panel agreed with her, concluding, "The most likely scenario for the events of April 19, 1989, was that the defendants came upon the jogger and subjected her to the same kind of attack, albeit with sexual overtones, that they inflicted upon other victims in the park that night." (Fairstein is not commenting on her preference in the D.A. race.)

Morgenthau defends the decision to drop the jogger case. "It was a no-brainer," he said. "I knew it was going to make a lot of people unhappy, but I just didn't see any other way that it could go. If we had had this guy as a witness saying, I did it and I did it alone, it would certainly have been a very different trial. We might not have even charged the other people with the rape." Morgenthau's immediate surrender in the jogger case makes a notable contrast with his hard line in the Palladium matter. "They want to evaluate the evidence on their own—no new trial in Palladium, no testimony by Reyes in the jogger case," Snyder told me. "What they have in common is the arrogance" of the D.A.'s office. Morgenthau, she says, "is not running the office. He has people running the office who have been there for twenty-five, thirty years, since I was there."

In the end, however, such an argument is unlikely to be enough to defeat Morgenthau. It usually requires a crime wave or a corruption scandal to force a sitting district attorney out of office—especially a legendary figure like Morgenthau—and neither event is likely to occur soon. Also, in local races the endorsement of the *Times* tends to be crucial, and the paper has long supported Morgenthau. The history of the Manhattan District Attorney's office offers comfort to Morgenthau, but it also brings a warning. It wasn't until 1973, when Frank Hogan was running for his ninth term, that he finally drew a serious challenger, and the race had several parallels to the current contest. The outsider was William vanden Heuvel, a young lawyer with close ties to the Kennedy family. He charged Hogan with being out of touch and adopted the venerable slogan "It's time for a change." As Andy Logan noted in these pages, it was "a bitter campaign, in which age and fading energies were frequently mentioned. ('It used to be Frank Hogan. Now it's Frank Hogan, aged seventy-one,' the District Attorney complained.)"

Thanks in part to an endorsement from the *Times*, Hogan wound up winning the June primary with ease. Then, on August 10th, he checked into St. Luke's Hospital for what his wife called routine tests. Over the next few weeks, his staff issued reassuring bulletins about his health, and the August 23rd filing deadline for new candidates passed. Then, on September 11th, the *Post* published two pages of Hogan's medical records from St. Luke's, reporting that the District Attorney had been brought to the hospital after a stroke and that he had since been operated on for lung cancer. Hogan never returned to the office. He resigned shortly after winning the election and died a few months later. Governor Malcolm Wilson named a little-known attorney named Richard Kuh as Hogan's successor, and in 1974 Morgenthau defeated Kuh.

Now Morgenthau, who was born closer to the Presidency of Martin Van Buren than to that of George W. Bush, is looking ahead. "I have a lot of unfinished business here," he said. Indeed, Morgenthau believes that he may go on even longer than another four-year term. As I was getting ready to leave his office, I asked him whether he would promise not to run for a tenth term in 2009, when he will be ninety years old. "Never say never," Morgenthau said. "Wouldn't want to be a lame duck." ♦

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BY ANDY BOROWITZ

Buy a pie at a pie shop, carefully remove the upper crust, and then gently lower a family of live gerbils into the pie. Replace the crust and storm back into the pie shop, indignantly pointing out the five little heads poking up through the crust. Collect ten million dollars and appear with the gerbils on "Larry King Live." Repeat in all fifty states, with different pastry-rodent combinations so as to elude detection.

Go to a frozen-yogurt shop, order a medium cup of vanilla, and then punch your index finger through the bottom of the cup so there appears to be a human finger in the yogurt. After demanding to see the manager, threaten to sue the yogurt chain for ten million dollars, making sure to tell him that you know Larry King. Note: Keep your finger very still during all of this, because if it wiggles even slightly this hoax has no chance whatsoever.

Order a bowl of chili at a fast-food restaurant. When the chili arrives, angrily complain that there is no human finger in the chili, despite the fact that you specifically ordered one. In the ensuing argument with the manager, shout the words "chili" and "human finger" for all in the store to hear. You will probably not get ten million dollars this time, but if you play your cards right the manager may pay you a little something just to get you to leave.

Get a bunch of your friends together, ring O. J. Simpson's doorbell, and tell him that you are "the real killers" and that you are surrendering to him so that he can finally stop searching for you. Get his reaction on videotape and sell it over the Internet.

On the eve of your bar mitzvah, tell your parents that you are converting to Catholicism. Say that you no longer want to be referred to as Seth Graubman and insist that they call you Francis Xavier Graubman. Force them to cancel the reception at the Lefkowitz Jewish Center and tell them you want to fly to Rome for an audience with Pope Benedict XVI. Just as they are pulling into the psychiatrist's driveway, tell them it was all a big joke and that you were Jewish all along. They will be so relieved they will finally break down and buy you a PlayStation Portable, which is all you really wanted in the first place.

Tell the authorities that you were held at gunpoint and abducted by a nationally famous runaway bride. Say that during the hostage drama that followed you read to her from "The Purpose-Driven Life" and "The Da Vinci Code," and that during a particularly boring chapter of the latter book she finally let you go. It will be her word against yours, and since her credibility is already shot, everyone will believe you. Testify at her trial and score a book/movie deal; become best friends with Ethan Hawke after he plays you in the film.

Convince the leaders of the world's only superpower that a Middle Eastern nation is loaded to the gills with weapons of mass destruction. Tell them that some broken-down old vans there are "mobile weapons labs," and persuade them to spend billions of dollars on an invasion and an occupation. After they scour the country for the weapons and come up empty, shrug your shoulders sympathetically and take over the oil ministry.

Tell the international community that you are merely performing a "routine cleaning" of your nuclear reactors and that you have no intention of harvesting nuclear material for the purpose of making weapons. Then, when no one is looking, lob a test missile into the Sea of Japan. You will not get ten million dollars or a book/movie deal or an appearance on "Larry King Live" for doing this, and you will not become friends with Ethan Hawke, but sometimes you have to do a hoax just because it's so damn funny. ♦

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ANNALS OF RELIGION

A HARD FAITH

How the new Pope and his predecessor redefined Vatican II.

BY PETER J. BOYER

For many Catholics, the white smoke that curled into the Vatican sky in the early evening of April 19th quickly came to be seen as a distress signal. When it was revealed that the new Pope was Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who had adopted the name Benedict XVI, Father Richard McBrien, a Notre Dame University theologian interpreting the event for American television, was plainly taken aback. Asked his response, McBrien hesitated, and then said, "Surprised." The day before, McBrien had predicted that the College of Cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church surely would not select Ratzinger as the next Pontiff, and warned that if Ratzinger became Pope "thousands upon thousands of Catholics in Europe and the United States would roll their eyes and retreat to the margins of the Church."

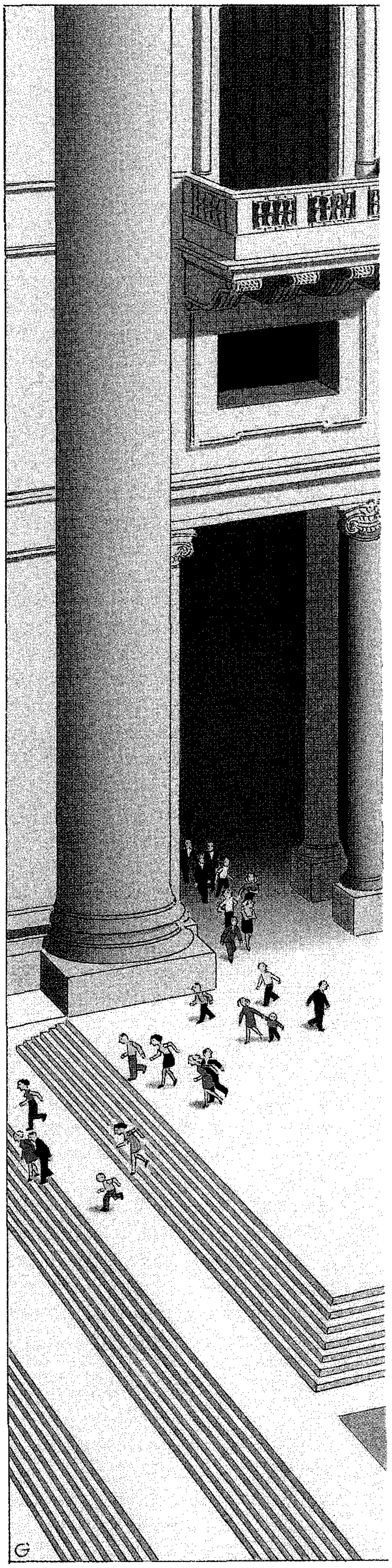
Now McBrien urged patience. There was some chance that Benedict might rise to his new station; in any case, McBrien said, "he is seventy-eight. We're not talking about a long pontificate."

Such evident discomfort was widely voiced by liberal Catholics, and was reflected in the early portrayals of the new Pope in the press and among the commentariat. The German Ratzinger was depicted as a rigid dogmatist, whose election foreshadowed possible schism, if not the destruction of the Church. Ratzinger had earned such derision by the fact of his service, nearly a quarter-century long, as the Church's guardian of the faith. In that role, he had enforced Church doctrine with a rigor that many Catholic theologians found chilling. But the animus directed at Ratzinger (who said he had prayed not to be elected) was also aimed, at least implicitly, at the pontificate of the man newly entombed in St. Peter's Basilica, Pope John Paul II.

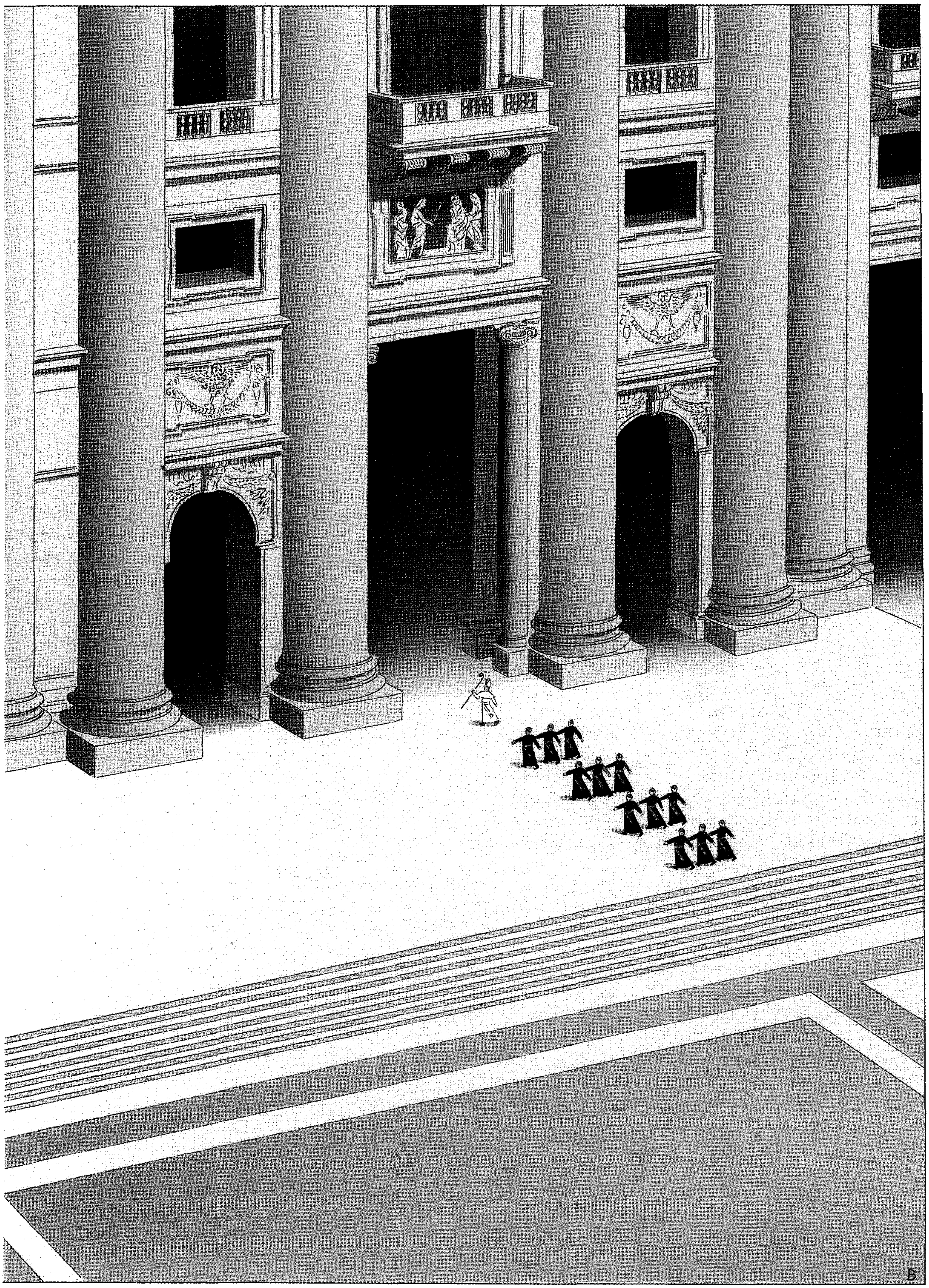
Because Karol Wojtyla's outsized presence so neatly suited secular description—he was the media-age Vatican pol who helped to bring down the Soviet Union—it had been possible to overlook the radical core of his papacy. His predecessor John XXIII, who began his pontificate by convoking the transformational Second Vatican Council, is credited with opening the Church to the modern world. John Paul II commenced his tenure on a starkly different note. His first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis* ("Redeemer of Man"), in 1979, opened with the words that foreshadowed his central theme: "The redeemer of man, Jesus Christ, is the center of the universe and of history." Beginning with this letter to the Church, and developed through a vast body of writing and preaching, Wojtyla's bold proposal for the world was that there is one abiding Truth, and in it resides the most promising hope for humankind. Liberals admired the Pope's ecumenical gestures—his historic visit to the synagogue of Rome, his pilgrimage to Jerusalem's Western Wall, his day of prayer with leaders of the world's other religions at Assisi in 1986—but they were dismayed by the publication, in 2000, of *Dominus Iesus*, the Church's declaration that Jesus Christ is the only true way to salvation.

Vatican II had acknowledged the validity of what is "true and holy" in other religions, which had led the Church toward what John Paul II saw as a dangerous acceptance of religious indifferentism. His 1990 encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio*, warned against the "incorrect theological perspectives" that led to the idea that " 'one religion is as good as another.' " The eternal mission of the Church, he wrote, was Christian evangelism to the world.

In his manifest, and deeply spiritual, Christocentrism, John Paul II had been



Benedict XVI is unlikely to compromise with disaffected progressive Catholics, even as the Church shrinks—a pruning that could leave a more orthodox, evangelical remnant.



GUY BILLOUT

the sort of Roman Catholic that even an evangelical Protestant could admire. (The Catholic writer Michael Novak quotes a Southern Baptist friend as having once remarked about John Paul II, "I'm as anti-papist as you can get. But you've got a Pope who knows how to Pope!") In an age he constantly decried for its relativism, Wojtyla proclaimed an absolute Truth, based on a fundamentally orthodox theology. Ratzinger's job was to hammer out the administrative details—punishing dissident theologians, framing the Pope's exclusion of women from the priesthood as infallible teaching, discouraging liturgical novelty, and so on.

It was this fundamentalism of John Paul that Cardinal Ratzinger was defending in his instantly famous homily at the Mass for the election of a new Pope, on April 18th. "We are moving toward a dictatorship of relativism," he said, "which does not recognize anything as for certain and which has as its highest goal one's own ego and one's own desires."

Ratzinger's quick election by the College of Cardinals—a Vatican version of a landslide victory—was an unwelcome signal to "issue" Catholics that Wojtyla's protracted era of orthodoxy had been granted an extension. Progressives had lived in a suspended mood of *fin de régime* for a very long time, which was occasionally expressed as an impatience with the old man's stubborn postponement of the inevitable. Now he was dead, and still his regime lived.

The new Pope clearly shares the view of his friend and predecessor that the Church must stand against modernity, to resist what he called "the waves of today's fashions or the latest novelties." The West, ever more faithless, is now considered mission territory, but Ratzinger has suggested that the Church itself must first undertake a process of purification. "Lord, your Church often seems like a boat about to sink, a boat taking in water on every side," he said in a Good Friday prayer at the Colosseum. "In your field we see more weeds than wheat. The soiled garments and face of your Church throw us into confusion. Yet it is we ourselves who have soiled them!" George Weigel, a biographer of John Paul II, noting Ratzinger's choice of papal name, has observed that one of the Benedictines' mottoes is *Succisa virescit*—"Pruned, it grows again." The Church is shrinking in Europe and, to a lesser degree, in the United States, and Ratzinger seems to face with an air of determined acceptance the prospect that it will grow even smaller. "The essential things in history begin always with the small, more convinced communities," Ratzinger said in an interview with the Catholic television and radio network Eternal Word two years ago. "So, the Church begins with the twelve Apostles. . . . Smaller numbers, I think. But from these small numbers we will have a radiation of joy in the world. And so, it's an attraction, as it was in the old Church."

There is much to suggest that the pruning was already well under way during the pontificate of John Paul II. In the American Church, the remnant taking shape can already be clearly seen in the growing, fervently evangelical new movements encouraged by John Paul II, and in a resurgent orthodoxy in the seminary. This renewal, as it calls itself, is led by a rising group of churchmen who are unashamedly orthodox and who were fiercely loyal to the person, and agenda, of John Paul II.

In the secular press, the shorthand way of distinguishing progressive Catholic ideas or individuals from conservative ones is by their orientation to Vatican II. Progressives pressing the case for a particular reform will often cite "the spirit of Vatican II." Conservatives, at the mention of that ecumenical council, tend to smile tightly and change the subject (unless the moment is seized for a full refutation). The Second Vatican Council ran in four sessions, from 1962 to 1965. Pope John XXIII, who called the Council in the hope of renewing the Church for its mission of presenting Christ to the world, died after the first session, in 1963. His successor, Pope Paul VI, presided over the final three sessions, and eventually came to the conclusion that the Council may have loosed within the Church an impulse of self-immolation. "Satan's smoke," he said in 1972, "has made its way into the temple of God through some crack." The fact of such a divergence suggests the degree to which Vatican II became subject to interpretation, and why, to a generation of Catholics, it remains a touchstone of their experience of Catholicism.

Pope John's call for a council, only the twenty-first in Church history, had been a surprise. In the years after the Second World War, the Church was, by conventional measure, quite strong. Mass attendance was high, and—on the surface, at least—the Church seemed stable. This was owing partly to the lingering effect of Pope Pius X's 1907 condemnation of Modernism—an amorphous movement that examined fundamental Christian doctrine (the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection, the Holy Trinity) in the light of science and history, and doubted its objective reality. The condemnation, and two world wars, discouraged theological adventurism through the first half of the twentieth century, but by the nineteen-fifties signs of ferment began to reappear.

A young American seminarian named Charles Curran experienced that ferment directly, when he went to Rome in 1955 to take up studies in theology. His professor was the German theologian Bernard Häring, one of several theologians who believed that the Catholic faithful were not well served by the Church's stifling legalism—its long list of rules that categorized human transgressions into "mortal" and "venial" sins. Häring had just published an influential book called "The Law of Christ," reflecting his view that Christian life was better lived as a personal quest to emulate the example of Christ than as an effort to dodge this or that infraction of the Church rulebook. In the field of moral theology, the issue to which Häring's teaching had particular relevance was contraception. Church teaching was, as it remains, that every act of sexual union must remain open to the conception of a new life. In the United States, artificial contraception was illegal in some states, largely because of Catholic pressure; Catholic couples had been uncertain about the acceptability of even natural contraceptive means until 1951, when Pope Pius XII approved the rhythm method.

By the time Curran left Rome, in 1961, on the eve of the Council, "There were just winds of change that was coming," he recalled recently. In his own scholastic career back in the States, Curran followed his mentor's path in developing a new approach to moral theology, encouraged by what was happening at the Vatican Councils as he tested the frontiers. "There's no doubt I was on my way to it before Vatican II, but certainly Vatican II created an atmosphere in which more people were open to this kind of thing," he told me.

Atmosphere was a key component of the Second Vatican Council. The world's bishops, Catholic intellectuals, and journalists had descended upon Rome, and the intermingling in coffee bars and hotels created a dynamic that infused the Church proceedings with the spirit of the times. The sexual revolution was dawning, the old order was crumbling; in the United States, the glamorous young President was a Roman Catholic, who had vowed not to be governed by Rome—a powerful signal to American Catholics eager to move into the cultural mainstream.

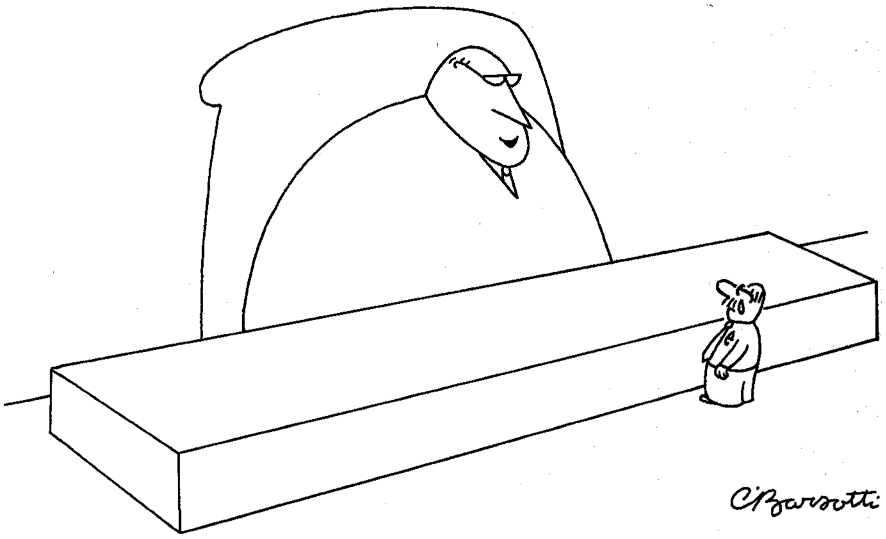
"I was in Rome as a student during three of the four sessions of the Second Vatican Council," Archbishop John Myers, of Newark, said. "At that time, the media actually became a player in the formation of Church theology. Throughout Rome, there were reporters, and they reduced things to the good guys against the bad guys." The Council was by its nature an almost unknowable thing, a vaguely defined reimagining of an ancient institution that occupied both the temporal and spiritual planes, conducted in a dead language, and shaped by crosscurrents of interest that were not plainly seen. The press posed the proceedings as a contest between ultraconservatives—the Roman Curia, Church officialdom, which wanted to maintain the rule-bound, tradition-laden status quo with an iron grip—and progressives: forward-thinking theologians and bishops who wanted Catholics to breathe the fresh air of a renewed personal faith. "The words that we typically used, and I include myself, to express what was going on in Vatican II tended to be metaphors borrowed from modern politics," Michael Novak, who covered the Council for *Time*, recently recollected. "Nobody was used to reading about the Catholic Church. It was enough to get the Catholic Church understood in terms of modernity, without showing the ways in which it was also critical of modernity."

The conservative/progressive taxonomy was true, as far as it went, but the more meaningful divide at the Second Vatican Council was that which eventually split the progressive wing into two philosophical camps. One school of thought was known as *aggiornamento* ("updating"), which imagined a new Church open to modernity. The other school, dominated by French and German theologians, called for a *ressourcement*, or refreshing of the faith by reëxploring its sources—Scripture and the early Church fathers. This group, which included the young German theologian Joseph Ratzinger, came to see *aggiornamento* as an accommodation to the modern world, which would weaken the faith without improving the world.

Vatican II was a historic turn, which was felt in the daily lives of the faithful through such changes as the new Mass, said in the vernacular, and the way in which the sacraments, such as Baptism and Penance, were practiced. Fish on Friday was no longer the rule. The Council produced breakthroughs on ecumenism, which brought the prospect of unity with the "separated" Christian faiths, and new bridges were built between the Church and Jews.

However, the Council had not produced anything like radical change in fundamental Church teachings (on such a matter as contraception, for example) or structure. The idea of Vatican II as a revolutionary manifesto arose not from any documentary product of the Council but from the notion of "the spirit of Vatican II." That was largely the construct of an Irish-American priest from the Bronx named Francis X. Murphy, who, under the pseudonym Xavier Rynne, wrote about the Second Vatican Council in a lengthy series of articles for these pages. After the last Council session closed, in 1965, Rynne wrote that from a "superficial point of view"—that is, a literal reading of the Council's documents—nothing radical had been achieved. But the Council, he proposed, had done nothing less than "lay the groundwork for a thorough 'reappraisal' of Catholicism." "More important than the documents themselves," he wrote, "the Council has consecrated a new spirit, destined in the course of time to remake the face of Catholicism. More important than the specific provisions of this or that decree are the truly revolutionary, biblically-oriented principles found scattered throughout the Council's work."

This idea of a catalytic "spirit of Vatican II" was embraced by liberals as a kind of license for new Catholic thought and practice. It was, perhaps, partly to curb this impulse that Pope Paul VI issued his 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, reaffirming the ban on contraception. If so, the move backfired, as it triggered open dissent by Western theologians, led in the United States by Charles Curran, who was by then an associate professor at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Curran openly asserted, and taught his students, that Catholic teaching on sexual matters was wrong. Curran's



"Kids in college? Well, won't it be nice to have them home?"

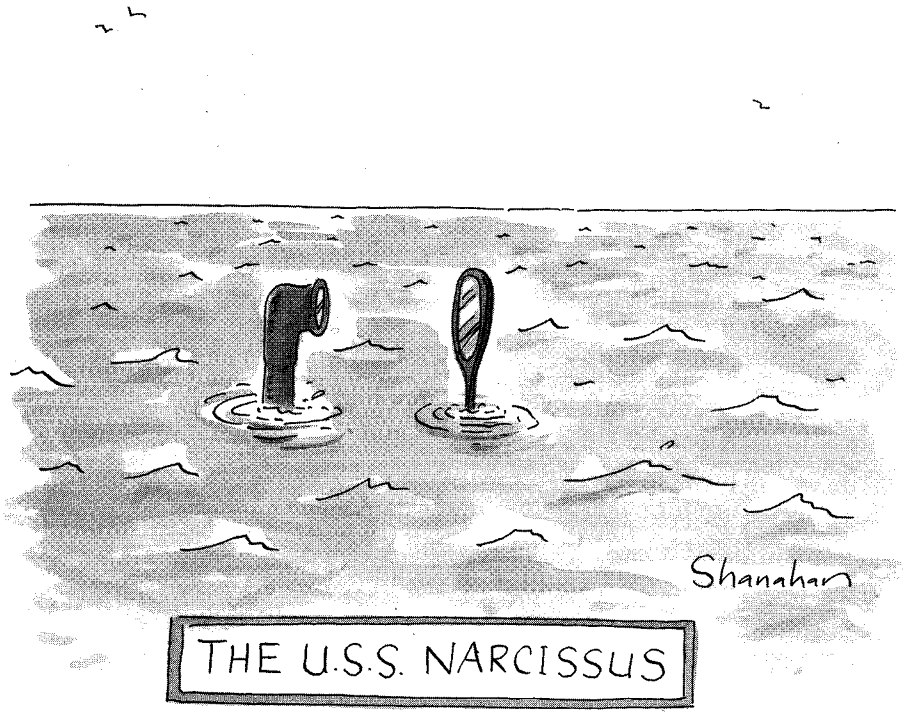
mentor, Bernard Häring, was among the many who joined in the dissent.

Other theologians pushed the faith into new speculative realms, some reminiscent of Modernism, others overtly associated with secular political movements. The most notable of these was liberation theology, which applied a Marxist interpretation to Christian doctrine, casting Jesus as revolutionary liberator; the Christian obligation to lift up the poor sometimes led clergy to support, and even participate in, the "people's liberation" wars in Latin America. Leonardo Boff, a leading liberation theologian, who had been a student of Ratzinger's in Germany, cited Vatican II as "the best possible theoretical justification to activities developed under the signs of a theology of progress," and developed his own Marxist critique of the Church—an unjustified hierarchy, as he saw it—for which he was twice ordered by Ratzinger to maintain a year of silence. (Boff eventually left the priesthood.)

Through most of the nineteen-seventies, during Pope Paul's decline and death, and then the monthlong pontificate of John Paul I, in 1978, "the spirit of Vatican II" was ascendant, especially in the American Church. Then Karol Wojtyla became Pope.

From the start, John Paul II claimed the mantle of Vatican II, interpreting the Council in a radically new way—by a literal reading of its work. As a young bishop from Kraków, Wojtyla had participated in all four sessions of the Second Vatican Council; through his long pontificate, his favored reference was Vatican II. The Council was, he insisted, a purely spiritual, not a political, event, which prepared the Church for the great task ahead: the evangelization of the world. His view of Christian salvation was individual redemption and eternal life, which more or less invalidated the idea of Jesus as an activist in class struggle. Yet John Paul II carried the ecumenical mandate of the Council beyond what even some of the "spirit of Vatican II" people might have hoped (too far, conservatives thought), even as he reined in those theologians who had wandered too far afield in the name of the Council's mandate. "He, in effect, said, 'No, that's not what we meant at all. Here's what the Council meant,' " Father Richard Neuhaus, the editor-in-chief of the magazine *First Things*, told me. "He has placed an abiding hermeneutic, I think, on the interpretation of the Council. This may be the biggest single contribution of this pontificate."

In his reinterpretation of Vatican II, and its attendant quelling of dissent, John Paul II relied heavily on the help of his friend and fellow Council veteran Joseph Ratzinger, who served as the head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for twenty-three years.



Charles Curran says he felt the breath of Ratzinger on his neck in 1984, when he read an interview Ratzinger granted to the Italian magazine *Jesus* in which Ratzinger catalogued what he considered the crisis of faith as it manifests itself in various parts of the world. "He said the trouble in Europe, it was nobody gives a darn," Curran said. "In South America, it's Marxism. In North America, it's morality. And he said the trouble in the United States is the culture and ethos are so opposed to the Gospel and the Church that one has to either dissent from the culture or dissent from Church teaching, and, unfortunately, too many theologians dissent from Church teaching. And, after that, I knew."

Soon after John Paul II became Pope, Curran heard from a friend in Rome that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith had called a university library searching for Curran's books. In 1985, Ratzinger sent Curran a set of "Observations," noting his departures from Church teaching. There followed an exchange of letters between the Professor and the C.D.F. Curran made it clear that he wouldn't change his teaching. Ratzinger responded in a letter, noting the "inherent contradiction" that "one who is to teach in the name of the Church in fact denies her teaching." Curran went to Rome and proposed a compromise that would allow him to continue teaching at Catholic University. In July, 1986, Ratzinger sent Curran notification, with the approval of the Pope, that he would "no longer be considered suitable nor eligible to exercise the function of a Professor of Catholic Theology." Curran was suspended by the university; he filed suit and lost. He now teaches at Southern Methodist University, in Dallas.

"It seemed to me that what the Vatican was doing was trying to make an example out of somebody, with the idea of sending the message that this could cause problems," Curran said.

Curran said that after the revocation of his license his life suddenly changed. "I don't get invited to anything sponsored by official Church bodies of any type," he said. "I could not get a job at a Catholic college or university—that was unavailable to me." On the other hand, he remains a priest, and he continues to teach. Shortly after his dismissal from Catholic University, Father McBrien, at Notre Dame, commissioned Curran to write the entries on moral theology and academic freedom for the HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism.

"I haven't changed anything, myself," McBrien said. "But I think it's had a chilling effect. And that's another bad thing about this pontificate. You see, Vatican II was actually a model, about how theologians and bishops should collaborate for the common good of the Church. It was a test case of how bishops and theologians could and should coöperate to produce some of the most important documents ever produced in the history of the Catholic Church. And what John Paul II's pontificate has done is to have changed the atmosphere from one of mutual trust and collaboration to one of mutual suspicion, to an adversarial relationship."

WOULD I BE PROUD TO WASTE SOME DUDE WITH THIS PRODUCT?
CHENEY

The widely held liberal critique in the United States of the Wojtyla-Ratzinger program is that in its stubborn insistence on orthodoxy it has closed off the Church to Catholics who disagree with Church teaching. Opinion polls, regularly cited during the papal interregnum, show that most American Catholics favored the use of contraceptives, opening the priesthood to married men (and, in slightly lesser numbers, to women), and allowing divorced people to remarry without obtaining an annulment. After John Paul II's death, the *Times* published an Op-Ed piece by the historian Thomas Cahill, a biographer of John XXIII, who cited the sparsely populated pews in American churches and asserted that John Paul II "may, in time to come, be credited with destroying his church."

Ratzinger, who has observed that "truth is not determined by a majority vote," concedes the prospect of a smaller Church, but he would likely contest the assertion that orthodoxy, or Vatican authoritarianism, is the cause. The defenders of the regime argue that, on the contrary, the Wojtyla-Ratzinger hard line has, if anything, stemmed the erosion of churchgoers in the United States. They point to the example of the mainline Protestant churches, whose self-consciously progressive turn since the Second World War—a deëmphasis on the miraculous in Scripture, the ordination of women, and, in the case of the Episcopal Church, gay priests—has coincided with a steady decline in attendance.

The crisis of the Catholic Church in the United States is broader, and deeper, than the issue of attendance alone, dismal as those numbers are—a decline in weekly Mass attendance from sixty-seven per cent of American Catholics in 1965 to about forty-five per cent today. At the time of Vatican II, there were a hundred and eighty thousand nuns in the United States; now there are seventy thousand. In 1965, three per cent of American parishes had no resident priest; by 2004, the figure was sixteen and a half per cent. In 1965, there were more than eight thousand seminarians, but in 2004 only three thousand.

To many Americans, of course, the crisis in the Catholic Church has less to do with statistical trends than with the sexual-abuse scandal that gravely violated the Church's sacred trust with the faithful and challenged its institutional credibility. The review board appointed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to examine the scandal discovered that, even on this subject, the post-Vatican II divide shaped perspective. One bishop told the board, "If you're conservative, homosexuality is the problem; if you're liberal, celibacy is the problem. So you tell me who you are, and I'll tell you what the problem is."

The board's report, issued in February, 2004, declined to place blame, per se, on either homosexuality or celibacy. But the report did declare that homosexuality in the priesthood was a factor. The scandal, it argued, was primarily not one of pedophilia—the molestation of children by adults—but of pederasty. Eighty-one per cent of the victims were male, and most cases of abuse involved a priest having sexual contact with a teenage boy. "We do not seek to place the blame for the sexual abuse crisis on the presence of homosexual individuals in the priesthood as there are many chaste and holy homosexual priests who are faithful to their vows of celibacy," the report stated. "However, we must call attention to the homosexual behavior that characterized the vast majority of the cases of abuse observed in recent decades."

The report also took note of the existence of a "gay subculture" at certain seminaries and in some religious orders; more than half the priests surveyed by Catholic University perceived such a subculture. Some conservative Church critics have called this the Lavender Network, arguing that it discouraged straight men from entering the priesthood and, to some degree, protected priests involved in abuse. "The Board believes that the failure to take disciplinary action against such conduct contributed to an atmosphere in which sexual abuse of adolescent boys by priests was more likely," the report stated. An "apostolic visitation" to the American seminaries by a Vatican-appointed team of bishops and priests is expected to take place this year, and the team may weigh in on the subject of what Bishop Wilton Gregory, the head of the U.S. Conference, has called "an ongoing struggle to make sure the Catholic priesthood is not dominated by homosexual men."

Evidence for the traditionalists' argument that those corners of the Church which cling to tradition have fared better, even prospered, tends to be anecdotal, because Church records do not distinguish between "conservative" and "liberal" parishes or seminaries. It seems clear, however, that some "conservative" religious orders have suffered no shortage of vocations, or callings to serve the Church.

"The more you present Christ faithfully, they're going to come," Raymond L. Burke, the Archbishop of St. Louis, told me. "Young people, particularly, are very responsive. And they don't want a watered-down version. In some sense, if it's not hard they suspect it—and they're right to do that, because our faith is demanding."

The hard faith preached by John Paul II, posed as a call to moral heroism, struck a startlingly responsive note with young people. By the millions, they made pilgrimages to his World Youth Day events—chanting, "J.P. II, we love you!"—and, in the end, they jammed St. Peter's Square to bid him farewell. Skeptics suggest that the big crowds reflected the youthful urge to participate in a huge group experience, and that the kids who showed up at a papal rally didn't necessarily show up in church. Most didn't, perhaps, but John Paul's pontificate undeniably shaped a generation of young Catholics that are more orthodox, and have a clearer understanding of the faith, than the generation they succeed. In the seminary, in religious orders, and on Catholic college campuses, they are referred to as Generation J.P. II.

"There's a change going on," Father Benedict Groeschel, of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, in the South Bronx, observes. "Many young people are looking for more authentic—if you will, a more literal—observance, of their faith and of gospel values. And I think there is a move toward authenticity, a demand that you ought to be what you say you are."

Groeschel's religious order is orthodoxy unplugged. He and his young friars wear long beards and gray medieval habits, girded by a rope tied into three knots—reminders of their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience ("No bling-bling, no sweet thing, Christ is King," in the community vernacular). The friars live primarily in a converted convent on 156th Street, sleep on blankets spread over the bare floors of their tiny cells, and do all the cooking and cleaning for themselves and for the homeless men who live in the shelter on the bottom floor of the friary. The order is a reform community of the Capuchin Franciscans, which was itself a sixteenth-century reform of the order founded by St. Francis three centuries earlier—each iteration being an effort to recapture the strict life of poverty and simplicity taken up by Francis of Assisi. The Friars of the Renewal began in 1987, when Groeschel and seven of his brother friars worried that their own Capuchin order in New York and New Jersey was losing its spiritual edge ("some crumbling on the edge of orthodoxy," Groeschel says). From that eight, the order has grown to more than a hundred, and has so many novices that it has had to find new housing space.

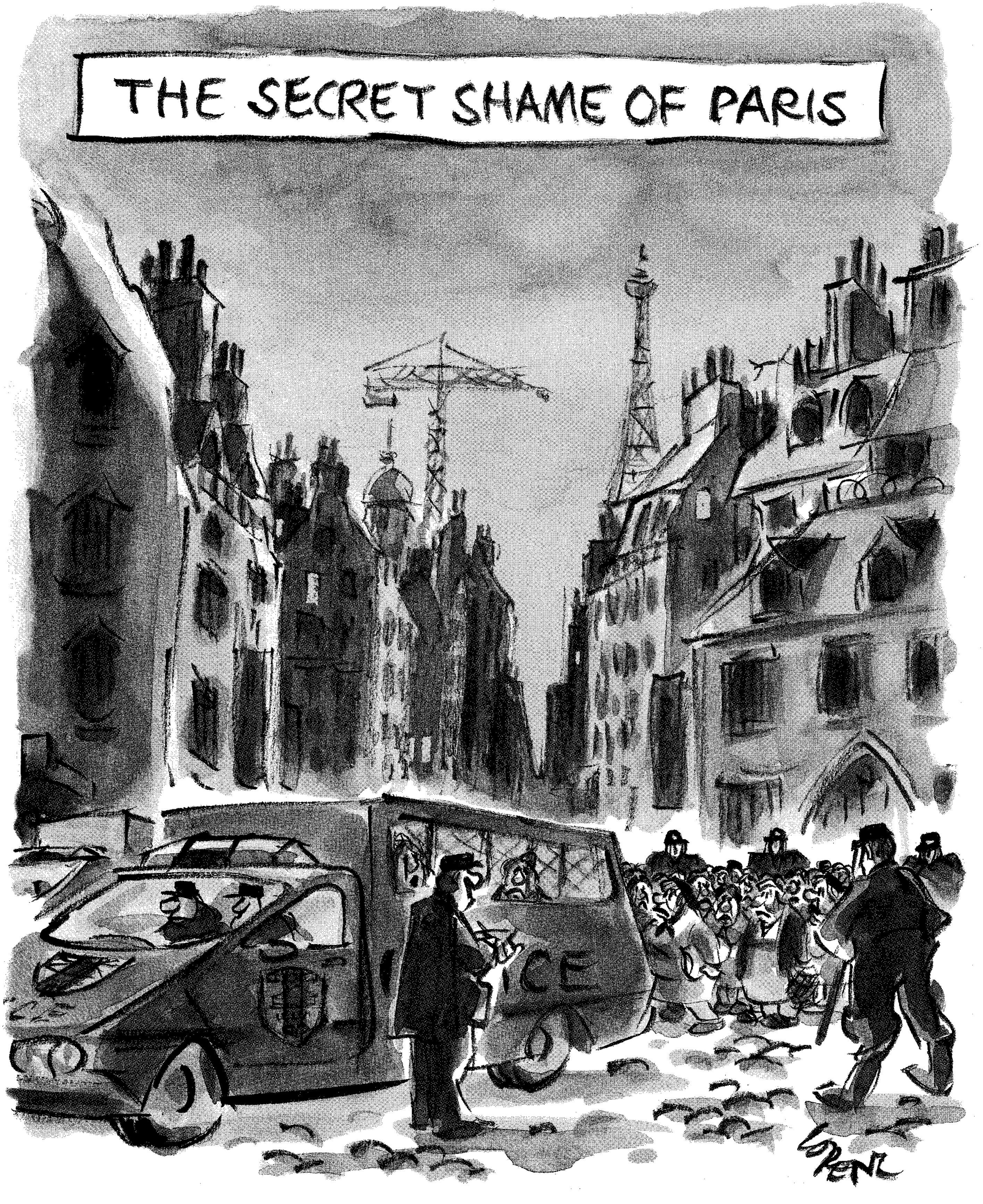
Some credit this growth to the personality of Father Groeschel, a psychologist, a prolific author of inspirational books, and a gifted preacher. But Groeschel, who is seventy-two, credits the spiritual rigor of the order. "Poverty, chastity, and obedience—that's the foundation of religious life," he says. "And chastity means chastity. You know, it means no voluntary sexual acts, including autoeroticism, or anything like that. And when kids have grown up in this sexually explicit culture that's a bit of a challenge. But they know that's what's coming. And they embrace it."

There is about the friars the air of an élite corps, reflecting a distinct sense of quest. "They are very idealistic," Father Bernard Murphy, who is in charge of the novices, says. "They want the real thing, they want the truth. And so they'll search for it wherever they can find it. They want things that are authentic, they want things that will challenge them beyond themselves." Responding to John Paul's challenge to "preach it from the rooftops," the friars preach the Gospel with an evangelical fervor, in their street encounters and in their revivalist parish missions.

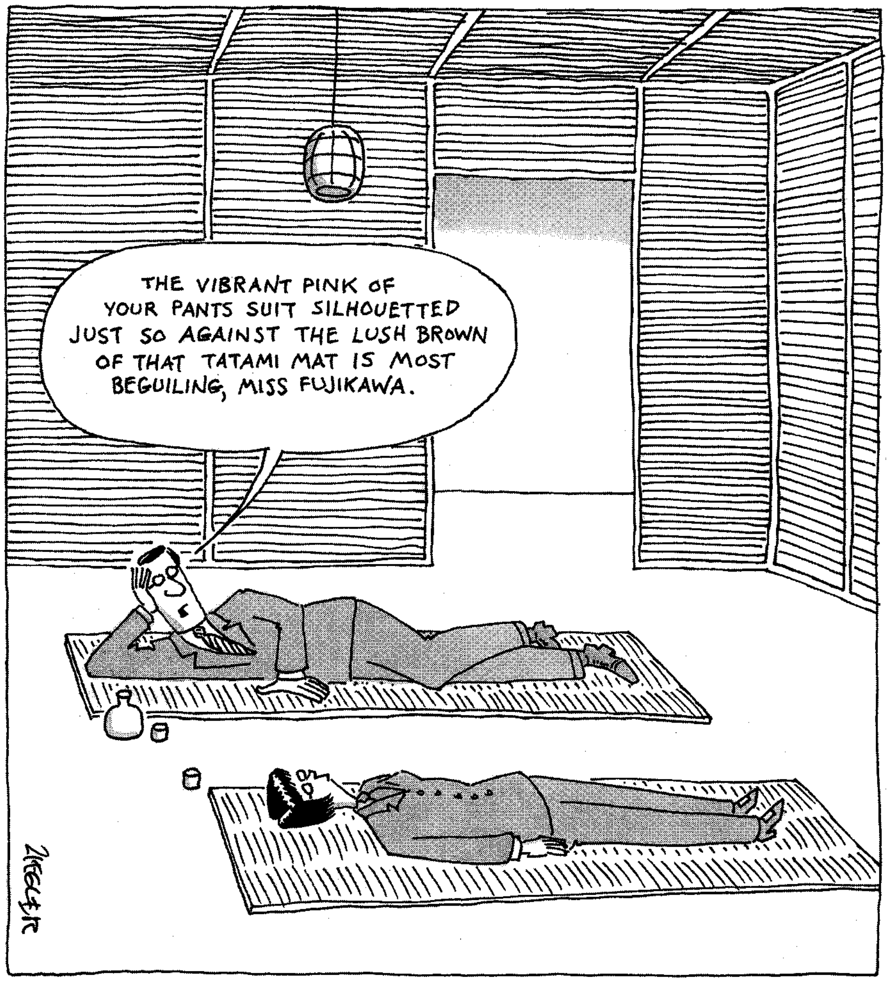
Many come to such an order after a radical conversion experience—an experience that is not uncommon within the many new Church movements that John Paul encouraged. In the spring of 1998, on Pentecost Sunday, more than three hundred thousand members of the apostolic movements were welcomed in St. Peter's Square by the Pope, who proclaimed them to be "providential expressions of the new springtime brought forth by the spirit of the Second Vatican Council." Some worried that the Pope was too ready to grant affirmation to any group showing signs of vitality. But the new movements—evangelical and orthodox, like the Pope himself—offered a stark contrast to some of the established orders of the Church, such as the Society of Jesus. The Jesuits, known for their intellectual rigor, were not always in favor with John Paul, partly because of their inclination to dissent. Now the order seems to be nearing a point of crisis. Since Vatican II, the worldwide number of Jesuits has fallen almost by half, to fewer than twenty thousand. Last year, the Jesuits received five hundred and twelve new members, but eight hundred and thirty-two Jesuits either died or left the order.

Archbishop Charles Chaput, of Denver, is a compact sixty-year-old of Native American descent whose manifest loyalty to the Pope and to the magisterium (Church teaching) makes him an exemplar of a group of American bishops who have been called the "John Paul II bishops"; that is to say, a group of bishops who give progressive Catholics hives. Referring to the progressive agenda, Chaput (pronounced "sha-PEW") told me, "The lack of orthodoxy has already proven that it's empty. So I can't understand why people want to move in that direction. I mean, all the things they're pushing for have already been tried by mainline Protestant churches, which are shrinking in numbers. And these religious orders, where they've abandoned the tradition, there are no vocations, but they still talk like they're the future. Why would they? You just have to open your eyes and see. If they have ears, they don't hear. If they have eyes, they don't see."

Chaput argues that orthodoxy has a growth market ("It's huge"), and can


THE SECRET SHAME OF PARIS
CE

PREDAWN ROUNDUP OF FAT FRENCHWOMEN


THE VIBRANT PINK OF YOUR PANTS SUIT SILHOUETTED JUST SO AGAINST THE LUSH BROWN OF THAT TATAMI MAT IS MOST BEGUILING, MISS FUJIKAWA.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON AT THE OSAKA NO-TELL MOTEL

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cite as evidence the case of the seminary he runs in Denver. For decades, it was known as St. Thomas Seminary. Housed in a handsome old Spanish mission-style compound, it was run by the Congregation of the Mission, or Vincentians, an order founded in 1625 by St. Vincent de Paul. In the years after Vatican II, when Catholic academics felt increasingly unbound by Church teaching, St. Thomas gained a reputation for being particularly freewheeling in its theological approach. Over time, some bishops became reluctant to direct their young candidates to the Denver seminary. (Father Groeschel, who was once invited to lecture at St. Thomas, offers a blunt assessment: "It stank.") Chaput's predecessor, Archbishop J. Francis Stafford, frustrated in his efforts to sway the faculty, eventually began to direct his own candidates to other schools. Enrollment dwindled, and in 1995 the Vincentians closed the seminary and sold the campus to the archdiocese. When Chaput took over, he renamed the campus the John Paul II Center for the New Evangelization, and moved the archdiocesan headquarters there. In 1999, he opened a new seminary, St. John Vianney, with an entirely new faculty and a markedly traditional approach. Thomas Aquinas was suddenly back in style.

The new seminary's rector is an intense forty-two-year-old priest named Michael Glenn, a West Point dropout who had avoided St. Thomas Seminary himself because of its reputation ("I thought I'd have conflicts"). Glenn attended Franciscan University, in Steubenville, Ohio, an evangelical campus that attracts orthodox and charismatic Catholics. He then received a bishop's appointment to the Pontifical North American College, in Rome, an institution regarded as the Pope's own training ground for the reëvangelization of America. "One third of my class at the North American College when I entered were affected in one form or another by the charismatic renewal," Glenn says. Nowadays, young Americans at the Rome seminary refer to themselves as "John Paul II's soldiers," and that is very much the image projected by Glenn's students in Denver. "To them," he says, indicating the dark-suited seminarians filling the lunchroom, "John Paul II wasn't a hero—he was a superhero."

The Denver project, judging by the numbers, has been a success. There are now eighty-five seminarians studying at the former St. Thomas campus, and the archdiocese has opened a second seminary for a group called the Neocatechumenal Way. Glenn says he finds that his students are not especially interested in the ecclesiastical politics that roiled the Vatican II generation. "They're just ready to move forward—it's not their experience," he said. "They have an openness to truth. . . . They're young, they're zealous, some of them only want to talk 'the Truth.' They don't even ask your name before they evangelize you. So they've got some skills they're going to have to learn along the way."

While theological inquiry is a valued Catholic tradition, there is not likely to be much dissent on Chaput's campus. "This is a seminary where people love the Church, and they love Jesus Christ," the Archbishop says. "And dissent is not part of that kind of love here. I think there's real serious theological reflection, and we study all the issues of the time. But we don't see them as being equal opinions. The opinion of the Church is the opinion. The others, it's just important to know them so that you know what the Church's challenges are."

At the mention of Chaput's name, Charles Curran, the American theologian chastened by John Paul, seems, momentarily, at a loss for words. Then he sputters, "He's, he's—terrible!" It was John Paul II's selection of bishops that inspired the most pointed criticism in Thomas Cahill's summation of his pontificate in the *Times* shortly after the Pope's death. "In order to have been named a bishop, a priest must have been seen to be absolutely opposed to masturbation, premarital sex, birth control (including condoms used to prevent the spread of AIDS), abortion, divorce, homosexual relations, married priests, female priests and any hint of Marxism," Cahill wrote. "It is nearly impossible to find men who subscribe wholeheartedly to this entire catalogue of certitudes; as a result the ranks of the episcopate are filled with mindless sycophants and intellectual incompetents."

Father McBrien, of Notre Dame, is unsparing in his view of the loyalist bishops appointed by John Paul. "His greatest deficiency, in my judgment," McBrien said a few weeks before the Pope's death, "is when it comes time to make bishops. Promoting bishops within the hierarchy to high-ranking positions in the hierarchy, he has named—and I'm not exaggerating—he has named the worst group of bishops in modern Church history. " Of Chaput, McBrien says, "He's one of the worst."

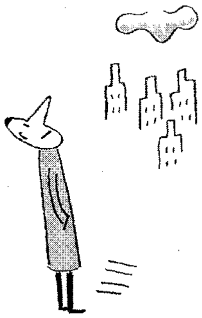
It would not surprise any of these critics of the late Pope that, on the day Cardinal Ratzinger was elected John Paul's successor, Charles Chaput gave thanks to God. "There's a special kind of joy knowing that I don't have to be anxious about the care of the Church," he said. "Any of us would have been if we didn't know the new Pope very well. And we know this man very well."

Chaput has had several dealings with Ratzinger over the years, most notably in regard to a matter that greatly complicated John Kerry's campaign for President—the question of a Catholic politician's duty, to his faith and to his constituency, on the issue of abortion. Chaput was one of several bishops who challenged the propriety of Catholics in public life presenting themselves for Communion while advocating policies favoring abortion rights. The resulting controversy exposed a deep divide among American bishops, and posed, in its way, as big a problem for Kerry's candidacy as the Swift Boat Veterans. Perhaps the most arresting fact about the last election is that the Roman Catholic Democrat from Massachusetts lost the Catholic vote to the born-again Methodist from Texas.

The abortion question has tested Catholics in public life for thirty years. The reading of Vatican II that understood the Gospels as a call to social action animated a progressive impulse in the American Church, lending moral authority to progressive positions on issues ranging from nuclear deterrence to housing the poor. But the rise of abortion politics after the Roe v. Wade decision, in 1973, challenged the progressive alliance.

In the early years after Roe, outspoken pro-life activism was consigned to the margins, and those Catholics who were confrontational on life issues, such as the New York bishop Austin Vaughan, were viewed as extremists, even kooks. The institutional Church, embodied by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, had a liberal ethos, and a disinclination to elevate abortion to a position of unique urgency. This view was articulated in the mid-nineteen-eighties by the dominant voice in the Conference, that of Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, of Chicago, in a political formulation that he called "the consistent ethic of life." Bernardin argued that Catholics needed to concern themselves with the entire "spectrum of life from womb to tomb," considering not just reproductive issues but capital punishment, warfare, and care of the terminally ill.

"If one contends, as we do, that the right of every fetus to be born should be protected by civil law and supported by civil consensus, then our moral, political, and economic responsibilities do not stop at the moment of birth," Bernardin said in a 1983 speech. "Those who defend the right to life of the weakest among us must be equally visible in support of the quality of life of the powerless among us: the old and the young, the hungry and the homeless, the undocumented immigrant and the unemployed worker. Such a quality-of-life posture translates into specific political and economic positions on tax policy, employment generation, welfare policy, nutrition and feeding programs, and health care. Consistency means we cannot have it both ways. We cannot urge a compassionate society and vigorous public policy to protect the rights of the unborn and then argue that compassion and significant public programs on behalf of the needy undermine the moral fibre of the society or are beyond the proper scope of governmental responsibility."



This line of reasoning came to be known as the "seamless garment" concept (a metaphorical allusion to the garment Christ wore to the Cross), and allowed Catholics who didn't wish to be identified with single-issue politics to contextualize abortion. Catholics in public life, such as the former New York governor Mario Cuomo, could defend their support of abortion rights by invoking their faithfulness to issues making up the seamless garment.

The pontificate of John Paul II challenged that construct and transformed Catholic politics. The Pope's 1995 encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, "The Gospel of Life," addressed the issue squarely: "Abortion and euthanasia are . . . crimes which no human law can claim to legitimize. There is no obligation in conscience to obey such laws; instead there is a grave and clear obligation to oppose them by conscientious objection."

John Paul seemed intent on specifically foreclosing any interpretation of Church teaching that allowed politicians to sidestep abortion, euthanasia, and embryonic research. Some Catholic legislators explained their pro-choice votes by stating that Roe v. Wade was law, and by citing the inappropriateness, in the context of American political culture, of imposing personal religious beliefs upon the public body. Such behavior in office, the Pope argued, was coöperation with grave evil. "This cooperation can never be justified either by invoking respect for the freedom of others or by appealing to the fact that civil law permits it or requires it," he wrote. "Human life, as a gift of God, is sacred and inviolable. For this reason procured abortion and euthanasia are absolutely unacceptable."

The encyclical did not necessarily convert the Bishops Conference, but it energized and legitimatized the pro-life activists, such as Bishop Vaughan. Deal Hudson, a conservative Catholic publisher, who helped sell George W. Bush to Catholics in 2000 and 2004, said, "Now these strident voices that the bishops used to label as fundamentalists, or fanatical, were embraced by the Pope."

The Pope's "culture of life/culture of death" refrain gave courage, too, to those bishops, growing in number and influence, who considered themselves

John Paul loyalists. The Bishops Conference continued to advance the seamless-garment proposition, but the dynamics of the episcopacy were clearly changing, and cleavages were widening. Bernardin died in 1996. In 1998, Chaput and others on the Conference's Pro-Life Activities Committee managed to produce a statement, speaking for the Conference, that essentially mirrored the Pope's "Gospel of Life" encyclical. In 1999, in its preëlection "Faithful Citizenship" report offering guidance to Catholic voters, the Conference again enunciated its consistent ethic of life. Now there seemed to be two distinct and, to a degree, competing teachings on the life questions, emanating from the institutional Church in the United States.

In the fall of 2002, Joseph Ratzinger stepped in, clarifying Church teaching in a "Doctrinal Note" to the bishops on "some questions regarding The Participation of Catholics in Political Life." Ratzinger emphasized that "John Paul II, continuing the constant teaching of the Church, has reiterated many times that those who are directly involved in lawmaking bodies have a 'grave and clear obligation to oppose' any law that attacks human life. For them, as for every Catholic, it is impossible to promote such laws or to vote for them."

The following year, in anticipation of the 2004 elections, the Bishops Conference issued a new "Faithful Citizenship" guidance report. "We are convinced," the report repeated, "that a consistent ethic of life should be the moral framework from which to address issues in the political arena." And the bishops once again advised against single-issue voting. "The Christian faith is an integral unity, and thus it is incoherent to isolate some particular element to the detriment of the whole of Catholic doctrine," their report stated. "A political commitment to a single isolated aspect of the Church's social doctrine does not exhaust one's responsibility towards the common good."

In November, 2003, one of the John Paul II bishops openly contested the official position of the Conference. If it was a grave sin to coöperate in abortion by supporting it through legislation, as the Pope had declared and Ratzinger had reiterated, what was to be the consequence to those politicians who continued to support abortion? "They are not to be admitted to Holy Communion, should they present themselves," Bishop Raymond Burke wrote, in a "Notification" to his diocese, "until such time as they publicly renounce their support of these most unjust practices."

Burke had been involved in a long dialogue with three pro-choice politicians in his diocese, who would patiently listen to his pastoral advice and then go vote for abortion rights. "All of a sudden, I realized they were not interested at all in talking about this," Burke recalled recently. "Their minds were made up. And they, somehow, were convinced that it was perfectly all right for a Catholic to vote for pro-abortion legislation. And the whole thing has really touched me in the depth of my soul, to see how serious the situation is."

Two weeks after Burke's notification, the Vatican named him the Archbishop of St. Louis.

Within the Bishops Conference, the notification was considered a breach of form, as it risked raising the question from the faithful in other dioceses as to whether their own bishops were following what Burke insisted was Church law. Within a few weeks, those questions gained national import, when John Kerry, the twice-married pro-choice Roman Catholic from Boston, won the Iowa Caucus and became the Democratic Presidential front-runner. Inevitably, Burke was asked whether he would deny Communion to Kerry. He said that he would.

In the course of the campaign, Kerry described himself as a faithful Catholic, a former altar boy who continued to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion. He said that he believed, with the Church, that life begins at conception; he would not, however, impose his religious beliefs on the American public by trying to change abortion law. It was a modification of the reassurance offered by John Kennedy forty-four years earlier, when he went to Texas to assure the Greater Houston Ministerial Association that, in essence, he was not too Catholic. Now, to some of the bishops, the question became whether or not John Kerry was Catholic enough.

In April, Archbishop Chaput wrote a column in the archdiocesan newspaper, headlined "How to Tell a Duck from a Fox," which seemed to address not only the Presidential race but the tight Colorado race for the U.S. Senate, between the pro-life Republican Pete Coors and the pro-choice Democrat Ken Salazar, who prevailed. Both men are Catholics. "Candidates who claim to be 'Catholic' but who publicly ignore Catholic teaching about the sanctity of human life are offering a dishonest public witness," Chaput wrote.

In May, Chaput's colleague, Bishop Michael Sheridan, of Colorado Springs, took the issue a step further. Not only did Catholic politicians "jeopardize their salvation" by supporting abortion, he wrote in a pastoral letter, but "any Catholics who vote for candidates who stand for abortion, illicit stem cell research or euthanasia suffer the same fateful consequences." The same would apply, Sheridan wrote, to the issue of the "deviancy" of same-sex marriage.

The press began to pay more careful attention to Kerry's church visits—the "wafer watch," some began calling it. Washington's Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, inheritor of Bernardin's mantle, spoke for many when he said he was not comfortable with the politicization of the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Such was the mood when, in June, the bishops came together for their annual spring conference, this year held at the Inverness Hotel, near Denver. The retreat, which was closed to the press, was to have been a time of quiet reflection, but the Communion issue inevitably imposed itself. Earlier, McCarrick had been chosen to head a task force considering the issue of Catholic politicians, their voting records, and the appropriate Church response. He had said that his report would be released in November, after the election. Chaput and his allies insisted that the subject be engaged there and then, and it was.

According to several bishops and others attending the meetings, McCarrick reiterated the Conference's official position against single-issue politics, and said that he had received a communication on the subject of Catholic politicians from Cardinal Ratzinger, in Rome. Apparently, McCarrick presented it to his brother bishops as though Ratzinger were in agreement with the Conference's position. Several bishops later expressed their pointed dismay at discovering, some time after the retreat, what Ratzinger had actually said in his communication to McCarrick. (The letter was leaked to the Italian magazine *L'Espresso.*) "Not all moral issues have the same moral weight as abortion and euthanasia," Ratzinger wrote. "For example, if a Catholic were to be at odds with the Holy Father on the application of capital punishment or on the decision to wage war, he would not for that reason be considered unworthy to present himself to receive Holy Communion. . . . There may be a legitimate diversity of opinion even among Catholics about waging war and applying the death penalty but not, however, with regard to abortion and euthanasia."

For those Catholic politicians who persist in supporting abortion, Ratzinger wrote, a bishop should offer pastoral guidance, including a warning that denial of Communion might be a potential consequence. If those measures fail, he added, "and the person in question, with obstinate persistence, still presents himself to receive the Holy Eucharist, the minister of Holy Communion must refuse to distribute it."

Raymond Burke learned of the actual content of Ratzinger's letter when he was in Rome some weeks later, to receive his pallium as archbishop. "I was stunned by the text, because we hadn't received that," he said.

"I personally was irritated," Elden Curtiss, the Archbishop of Omaha, said, "because I think his point of view should have been expressed right from the beginning, and clarified."

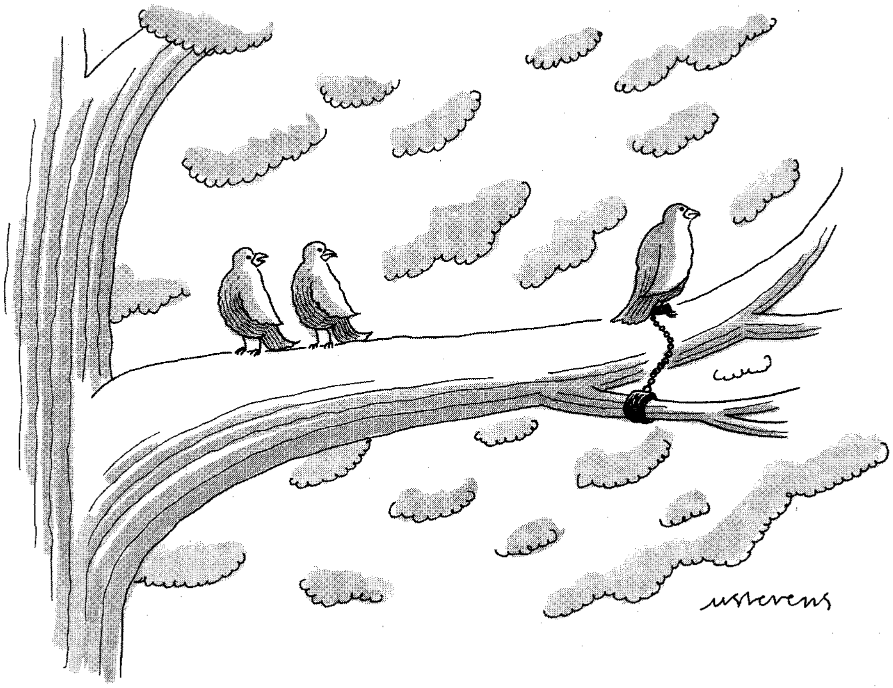
As it happened, Chaput had a pretty good idea of Ratzinger's position. He'd been in contact with Ratzinger on the subject, and got himself attached to McCarrick's task force, along with Cardinal Francis Eugene George, of Chicago, an ally and a man who commands broad respect in the Conference. A compromise statement was worked out on the basis of an interim report from the task force, and at the end of the retreat the bishops announced that the decision of whether or not to deny Communion would be an individual pastoral one, to be made by each bishop.

Through the rest of the campaign, John Kerry found himself answering questions about his faith, and Catholic voters were advised by their bishops that Kerry was in grave error or, depending upon the bishop, that he was not. More bishops joined the fray, arguing both sides of the case. "A lot of Catholics don't know squat about their own faith tradition," Father McBrien says. "I mean, there are a lot of Catholics who probably thought it was a sin if they voted for Kerry. They didn't know what to think. They were confused."

After the election, President Bush told Archbishop Myers that the influence of the outspoken J.P. II bishops had decided the race.

Now Ratzinger is Pope Benedict XVI and orthodoxy is in the ascendant. Vatican II-generation priests are retiring, many with the lament that the young priests who are replacing them are too wedded to tradition. Democrats, meanwhile, have already begun to reorient themselves on the moral-values plane. Hillary Clinton has declared that abortion is "tragic," and revived the "safe, legal, and rare" formulation employed by her husband in 1992. It had been at Bill Clinton's nominating Convention that year, in Madison Square Garden, that the late Pennsylvania governor Bob Casey, a Catholic, charged that he had been kept off the stage because of his pro-life views. Now the Democrats have recruited his son Robert Casey, Jr., the pro-life Pennsylvania state treasurer, to challenge Republican Senator Rick Santorum. Harry Reid, the pro-life Democrat from Nevada, was made Senate Minority Leader. In Virginia, the Democrat Tim Kaine, a Catholic, is running a faith-based campaign for governor. In the era of Benedict, it has occurred to some Democrats that the prudent course is to be at least as Catholic as the Methodist who defeated John Kerry.

If the introduction of Holy Communion into the political arena in 2004 was, for many American Catholics, a divisive and regrettable turn, it was no less regrettable for Chaput—according to Chaput—who criticized the press for a shallow understanding of the Eucharist and its centrality to the Catholic faith. But Chaput, like Ratzinger, also believed that such controversy might ultimately prove salutary. "Whenever the Church is criticized, she understands herself better and is purified," he wrote last spring. "And when she's purified, then she better serves the Lord. We're at a time for the Church in our country when some Catholics—too many—are discovering that they've gradually become non-Catholics who happen to go to Mass. That's sad and difficult, and a judgment on a generation of Catholic leadership. But it may be exactly the moment of truth the Church needs." ♦



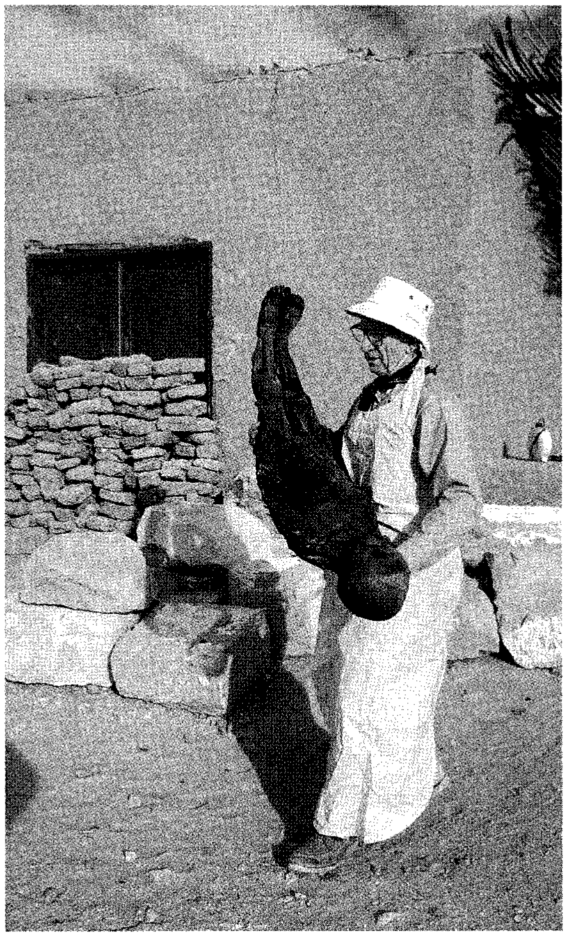
"She's considered a flight risk."

PROFILES

THE MUMMY DOCTOR

What autopsies reveal about the long-ago dead.

BY KEVIN KRAJICK



Arthur Aufderheide in Dakhla Oasis, Egypt, 1998; opposite, a ninth-century mummy from Peru.

At the end of a steep, potholed lane in Duluth, Minnesota, is a three-story brick former elementary school that sits atop a knoll, nearly hidden by a grove of apple and chokecherry trees. A creek flows beneath the building's foundation, through a stone archway. Raspberries and goldenrod edge the windows of the old kindergarten classroom on the ground floor. These days, the building houses an assortment of University of Minnesota science labs. The kindergarten room is the headquarters of Dr. Arthur Aufderheide, one of the world's leading experts on the dissection of mummies, and a founder of modern paleopathology—the study of ancient diseases.

Aufderheide is a tall, straight-backed man of eighty-two who habitually wears a bolo tie and jumps easily from boulder to boulder on a hike. He has the kindness and good humor of a Midwestern country doctor. The day I met Aufderheide in Duluth, he was wearing a brown tweed jacket and a wash-and-wear pullover shirt whose breast pocket bulged with a black leather notebook—his daily uniform. The shirts, he explained, are "designed to be worn without a T-shirt, so you spend less time getting dressed." He led me past a worn marble staircase into his lab, which houses the International Mummy Registry: six thousand withered chunks of liver, lung, brain, and other tissues that he has taken from some six hundred mummies, from the Arctic to the Sahara.

Upon taking over the space, he had blacked out the wall of windows to keep out the summer sun; the room was now illuminated with cool fluorescent light. In one corner, where an old toy chest used to be, sat a rusting, unplugged nineteen-fifties Frigidaire—one of several deceased appliances that provided airtight storage for mummy parts. "I have never cared to possess an entire mummy," Aufderheide said. "It's a formidable challenge to preserve. Even in museums, they often end up getting eaten by insects and mold."

A motley collection of shelves and cabinets contained boxes with labels such as "Cemetery Soil Samples" and "Marc Kelley's Ribs." There were countless books on medicine and on the ancient world, including the works of Diodorus Siculus and Herodotus. "All knowledge is connected to all other knowledge," Aufderheide said. "The fun is in making the connections."

Paleopathologists value the preserved tissues of mummies because they may harbor signs of ailments, or even traces of ancient pathogens. This type of evidence allows scientists to track the historical arc of diseases such as influenza or tuberculosis, and determine the cause of medieval plagues like the Black Death. Aufderheide wonders, for example, why cancer seems rare in mummies, no matter where they come from. Is it because these individuals weren't exposed to industrial chemicals, or is there some other factor at work? "Since this is such a new area, almost anything I do is useful," he said.

Aufderheide has written what is considered the authoritative guide to the field, "The Scientific Study of Mummies," published in 2003 by Cambridge University Press. It includes details such as the nineteen-step recipe used by the Jivaro tribe of Ecuador to shrink the head of a rival killed in war (Step 2: "Transect the neck at the level of the clavicle, pass a band through the mouth and out of the neck, attach a cord and flee the raided village") and illustrations showing how to explore the innards of someone who has been dead for several thousand years.

"Compared to modern bodies, dissecting mummies is salvage pathology," Aufderheide said. "You lose a great deal. DNA falls apart. Often, you're working with an alphabet soup of broken-down proteins where there used to be organs. But we're slowly adapting. The little bit we've done so far shows that we are capable of generating an enormous range of information."

Aufderheide opened the Frigidaire and pulled out a pile of cardboard dog-food boxes, which he had reinforced with duct tape. Neatly lined up inside them were rows of Whirl-

PETER BENNETT; OPPOSITE: FELIPE CÁRDENAS-ARROYO

Paks, six-ounce sterile plastic bags designed for taking milk samples at dairies, each containing mummy parts. Some observers say that mummies smell like old books; others say dried leather. But, to me, they smelled like some dried edible giant ants I had once bought in South America, and retained for some years past their prime. It was a faintly acrid, dried-cheese aura—the distilled essence of testy old proteins that had got this far and developed a few infirmities but were too mean to give up just yet.

When the human body expires, it usually disappears on a quick, predictable schedule. Within minutes, cell organelles rupture, releasing enzymes that eat the surrounding flesh. Bacteria that inhabit the gut proliferate, race through the visceral veins to the lungs and the heart, then spread to other organs through the arteries. The corpse begins rotting, a process that typically ends, Aufderheide explained, with the "dissolution of skeletal tissue by interaction of bone mineral with ions in the groundwater."

Occasionally, man or nature produces the happy exception that is a mummy. The chief agent here is desiccation: flesh-eating enzymes need water in order to work—"a simple truth exploited by those who bring us beef jerky and dried fruit," Aufderheide said. Thus, there are countless natural mummies in places like the Atacama Desert of South America. There, at least seven thousand years ago, the Chinchorro people learned to accelerate the mummification process by placing smoking coals inside their relatives' body cavities after disembowelling them. But the Egyptians, who began making mummies three thousand years later, perfected the art. They systematically removed internal organs (a procedure that eliminates both water and decay-causing microbes), then covered the remains with salts to leech out any remaining moisture, and smeared the corpse with myrrh, pine pitch, and other resinous sealants.

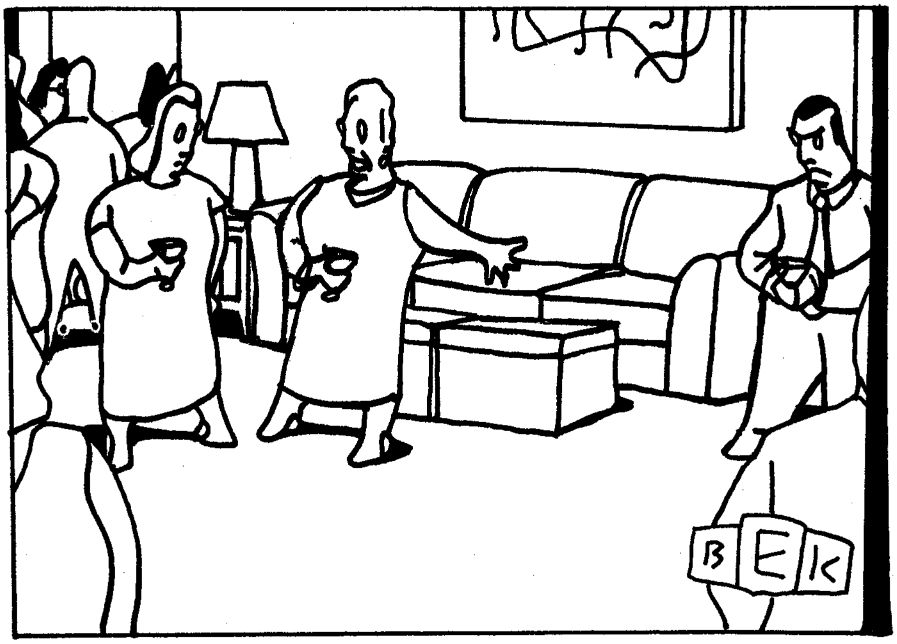
Wrapping the body in linen, or perhaps even just leaving it clothed, seems to contribute to preservation in dry climates, because the material draws moisture away from the body, but it is not necessary. Prehistoric Aleutian Islanders used caves heated by volcanic vents to dry the bodies of their dead, then wrapped them in bird skins and furs; catacombs beneath the sixteenth-century Capuchin monastery in Palermo, Sicily, today hold two thousand unwrapped (though in many cases clothed) mummies, preserved in part by dry limestone walls and excellent ventilation. Frozen mummies are the rarest kind, but occasionally specimens like Ötzi, the so-called Iceman of the Alps, are found embedded in glaciers, mountaintops, or permafrost. Scientists speculate that the peat in European bogs makes mummies by removing metal ions that facilitate decay.

As for more modern methods of mummification, Aufderheide told me that the effect of today's formaldehyde solutions doesn't last that long beyond the funeral. "Formalin will eventually evaporate, and then we're back to the decay process," he said. "I give today's bodies five to thirty years." Aufderheide plans to be cremated when he dies.

Aufderheide slid open a metal drawer. Inside were a few standard scalpels, which he rarely uses, because the flimsy blades often break on time-hardened mummy flesh. Up on a shelf was his Martin autopsy saw, an electric tool with a crescent-shaped nickel-plated steel blade that efficiently penetrates mummies. Many Third World field sites lack electricity, however, requiring a more primitive approach. From a pants pocket Aufderheide produced his basic road tool, a Swiss Army knife, whose blade he hones razor-sharp with a whetstone that he always carries. Inside the drawer were some curved scissors, good for plucking out eyes. A hacksaw and a chisel, he explained, handle the toughest mummified materials, such as bone.

A mummy's skin, ribs, and chest membranes are generally stuck together. A U-shaped incision through the rib cage, then a line connecting the top of the U below the collarbone, forms a plate that can be lifted like the lid of a hatbox, Aufderheide said. If the mummy is curled up, which is often the case, you can try prying the thighs from the chest with chiropractic firmness. If the mummy resists straightening, you can remove the legs by severing the hip ligaments and twisting counterclockwise; they will have to come off anyway, if this is to be a full dissection. Before lifting the chest plate, you must carefully slide a thin, long-bladed kitchen knife under the edges, to loosen any underlying adhering tissue—otherwise, you might tear out the lungs or heart by accident.

A mummy's interior presents special challenges. The body cavities of the recently deceased are packed with organs, of varying color and consistency. "The liver is usually obvious," Aufder-



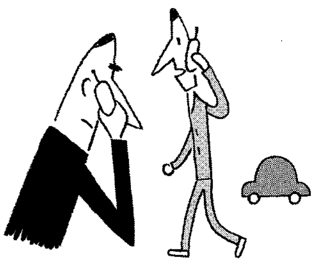
"Would you be a doll and go be angry at the world with Henry?"

heide said. "It's dark brown and big, and you can follow the hitch down there to the kidney." The lungs are still puffy and pinkish; other organs run to various shades of gray. With a mummy, nearly everything has turned brown, and shrunk considerably. Organs lose shape, turn powdery, or go missing. Lungs collapse like old accordions onto the back of the rib cage. Through the centuries, someone's gall bladder could wind up in his pelvis, or his liver in his chest—a phenomenon for which Aufderheide has coined the term "organ migration."

Well-preserved organs may manifest symptoms of disease, but this is rare. Aufderheide normally takes a sample of every tissue present inside a mummy, whatever its apparent state. A thumb-size chunk is enough for lab tests that could reveal hidden germs. Aufderheide estimates that only ten to fifteen per cent of mummies show a cause of death; fortunately, chronic ailments reveal far more about people. Parasitic worms of many species are often spotted in coprolites—ancient excrement—in the lower digestive tract. Intestines also host intact bits of ingested vegetables, insect parts, and pollen that shed light on ancient diets, pests, and the season of the year in which a person died.

As Aufderheide rummaged through his collection, we occasionally encountered objects that were eerily recognizable: a shrunken tongue, speckled with taste buds; a hairy half-dollar-size ear; ten emaciated white fingers, curled like crab claws, taken from ten Chilean mummies. ("I was working with a rheumatologist at the time," Aufderheide said of the fingers.) He has analyzed only a small percentage of them; as a pioneer in the field of paleopathology, he told me, one of his most important tasks is to carefully extract, catalogue, and organize samples that can one day be studied by others, using techniques that are now still in their infancy.

One box contained a pair of prehistoric Chilean eyeballs. Aufderheide has developed a system of "organ scores"—an index of how often tissues survive—and eyeballs are No. 1. They exist in ninety-three per cent of mummies that have heads. The water inside the eyes drains fast, leaving the durable protein casing and other parts quite intact. The Chilean eyeballs were yellowish-brown, and, with the optic nerves trailing behind, the shrivelled orbs resembled wild chanterelles, though others in the collection had collapsed inward so neatly that they looked more like golf tees. "I have scores of eyes, if somebody wants to study them," Aufderheide told me. They could be examined, he said, for signs of eye disease and other ailments, such as hypertension and diabetes, that can be signalled by changes in the eye. "I'm waiting to find someone who's really committed to eyes before I give these away," he said.



Human hair, which is made of tough, insoluble keratin, is just as durable as the eyes. Aufderheide has seen plenty of skeletons that still had lush tresses on their skulls. He pulled out a packet of black hair, and a photograph of the ancient Chilean woman to whom it belonged. Her hair was combed and braided, just as loving relatives must have left it. "I often think about what these people were like," he said. "I would like to know what she did every day. How she took care of her kids."

At the bottom of one shelf, in a box that looked as if it were meant to hold greeting cards, were nineteen penises. (Penises are much hardier than, say, breasts, which tend to flatten and disappear.) Many of the penises resembled vacated butterfly cocoons. "I would not know what most of these things were unless I knew where they came from," Aufderheide confessed. He has saved the penises because they "are sponges for blood"; tests on a mummy's preserved blood could, potentially, identify antigens or antibodies linked to specific diseases.

The Whirl-Paks contained many samples of brain matter, pinches of reddish-brown granules—typical of the brain, which liquefies within days, leaving behind this precipitate when the skull dries out. "If you wanted to study Alzheimer's, you'd be out of luck—you'd need a whole brain," Aufderheide said. But the residue could come in handy someday. "There are some diseases that deposit minerals in the brain," he said, citing Wilson's disease, a rare genetic defect that causes a buildup of copper in the brain. Another set of bags contained mummified bowels, which looked like sausage casings. One sample, which was still flexible, looked grotesquely overstuffed with something—possibly coprolites. Aufderheide palpated the specimen rapidly through the plastic with both hands. Its distended size, he said, could signal Chagas' disease, which is caused by a deadly South American parasite; the disease can kill you by making it impossible for you to defecate.

Aufderheide then extracted a special prize from the refrigerator: a dozen bags containing parts of Acha Man, perhaps the oldest mummy in the world. After Chilean archeologists found Acha Man, under an ancient house in the Atacama, in 1992, Aufderheide took samples and had him radiocarbon-dated. The results showed that he was about nine thousand years old. "I avoid saying he's *the* oldest mummy," he said. "The moment you say 'oldest,' people will come out of the woodwork and say theirs is a few years older." (Radiocarbon dating has a margin of error running from decades to centuries.) The mummy was missing much of the lower third of his body and most of his organs, but parts of his muscle, skin, and brain remained. Acha Man died young, of unknown causes, though scientists could tell from the thickness of his inner skull that he had probably suffered from chronic iron deficiency. Aufderheide handed me the bag with Acha Man's eyes. They were now just a small, crumbling handful of red and brown debris.

I asked Aufderheide if he wasn't afraid of exhuming a lethal ancient germ. He said no. Bits and pieces of genetic material may survive, but a live ancient pathogen has never been found in a mummy. "They just don't last," he said. Even researchers looking for samples of the 1918 flu strain in Arctic graves several years ago came up with only fragments of the virus. Sometimes Aufderheide wears rubber gloves during dissections, but this is only to avoid getting cut on sharp mummy parts. He said, "I wash my hands after touching a mummy, but, really, I'm just going through the motions."

Aufderheide spent decades as a hospital pathologist and part-time medical examiner performing autopsies on what he calls "live people"—the dead victims of Duluth car accidents, strokes, and cancers—before fulfilling a late-in-life desire to study people who lived long ago and far away. He was born in 1922, in New Ulm, Minnesota, a prairie farm town settled by immigrants. His parents, who spoke German at home, ran a brickyard, and belonged to a strict Lutheran sect. Aufderheide spent a lot of time in the woods trapping muskrats and dissecting frogs, and dreaming of being an Arctic explorer. When he expressed an interest in medicine, a teacher told him that if he went to college he hoped he would not be taken in by that nonsense about evolution.

Aufderheide attended medical school during the Second World War, was inducted into the Army, and married Mary Buryk, a nurse from a Ukrainian immigrant family. He served in occupied Europe, and while he was in Vienna he gravitated toward pathology at the Allgemeine Krankenhaus, the sprawling hospital where nineteenth-century doctors had developed the art of the modern autopsy. "With a living person, you treat them, but they go on to die of something else," he said. "You never know how the story turns out. If the person is dead, you know—all the information is in front of you." Cutting into the dead, even babies, didn't faze him. "Many people identify with bodies, which I understand, but I do not. To me, the body is a vehicle that is obviously important in life, but the essence of a person leaves when you die." He has the added advantage of a congenitally deficient sense of smell. "Some people say I'm designed for dissection," he told me, smiling.

In 1953, the Aufderheides moved to Duluth, where Arthur had been offered a post at St. Mary's Hospital. At the time, Duluth had no full-time medical examiner, so Aufderheide covered that duty as well. He loved the work, but in his mid-forties, he told me, "I found myself not as excited to get breakfast down so I could get to work that morning." He and Mary sold their big house and moved, with their daughter and two sons, to a matchbox ranch—probably the smallest physician-owned house in town—so that they could save money for adventure travel. (One son, Tom, is a doctor who specializes in emergency medicine; the other, Walter, is a high-school biology teacher. Their sister, Patricia, is a professor of mass communication at American University, in Washington, D.C. She told me that her father used to take her and her brothers to the morgue with him when she was a child but that "it wasn't creepy" when he told her, for example, why a dead old woman's toes had turned blue—it was just another interesting fact about the world.)

In 1964, Aufderheide and three friends floated eleven hundred miles down the Mackenzie River, in Canada, to the Arctic Ocean. Throughout the sixties and seventies, he travelled with Canadian Inuit hunters by dogsled. One day, he had a beer with Ralph Plaisted, a Minnesota insurance man and snowmobile enthusiast. Aufderheide idly suggested snowmobiling to the North Pole, and Plaisted organized a trip with the help of corporate sponsors. Aufderheide went along as an amateur navigator. Blizzards and melting sea ice forced them to turn back, however, and the following year Aufderheide gave his spot in the expedition to a professional navigator. Plaisted reached the Pole on April 19, 1968, in what was the first successful overland trip since Peary's, in 1909.

When the University of Minnesota opened a new medical school in Duluth, in 1972, Aufderheide was hired to teach pathology, a position that required him to pursue academic research. "I was in my fifties," he recalled. "I couldn't see spending seven or eight years getting a Ph.D. in some basic science. So I decided to go with what I've got. I'm a physician. I enjoy travel and unfamiliar cultures. Why not study diseases of ancient people?"

In the nineteenth century, when Egyptomania swept Europe and America for the first time, tomb looting yielded large quantities of mummies. There were so many that some were ground up for paint pigments; others were harvested for patent medicines. (In "Innocents Abroad," Mark Twain dubiously asserts that mummies fuelled Egyptian steam locomotives.) Intact specimens appeared in private collections, circuses, and "unwrappings"—quasi-academic theatrical events in

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DAD, YOU RETURNED TO ME THIS MORNING

The transparent clarity
of childhood happiness,
like water.

That colorless sparkling,
tasteless but so fresh.
To drink, or ribboning over
a large stone along the brambled
bank of a river I remember.
Said to be a large wily brown
trout under there.

Two children astride me
in rumpled bed this A.M.,
and when she petted his
baby head, crooning a word
almost his name,
his eyes hooked her face,
his hands discovered applause
in halting pace:

clap (pause) clap clap!
Their mingled laughter,
the nickname again,
the merry clap-clap,
the jerking bright giggles

so free I dropped through time
and saw again the iridescence
across the belly of a trout
slipping whole in my hand
in sunlight for just long enough
to see not the usual liverish
speckling of brown but the spray
of pink, pale blue, gold-yellow
you said meant
"rainbow"
and I grasped him, wet and muscular,
smuggled in our air
for a wild moment before your
expert hand unhooked
and slipped him back.

—*Deborah Garrison*

which the dead were stripped of their linens to the accompaniment of a lecture or a piano player. Sometimes, at unwrappings, physicians did a bit of dissecting. In 1825, Augustus Bozzi Granville, a British surgeon, spotted in the abdomen of one ancient woman a huge ovarian cyst, which he meticulously drew and documented.

More systematic work on mummies started around 1900, just before the partial flooding of the Nile Valley by the first Aswan Dam, as workers disinterred tens of thousands of ancient Egyptians. By then, X-rays had been invented and the field of microbiology had been born. While inspecting the kidneys of two three-thousand-year-old mummies, in 1910, Marc Armand Ruffer, a French microbiologist, found dried eggs of the schistosomiasis worm, a parasite that is still prevalent in Egypt. In other mummies, he found gallstones, inflamed intestines, and a spleen that had apparently been enlarged by malaria. The insides of many of the ancients' blood vessels, he discovered with surprise, contained calcified spots—hardening of the arteries—even though the Egyptians ate a nutritious low-fat diet centered on cereals. These observations, which suggested that many diseases associated with modernity have a long history, often raised more questions than they answered. Ruffer invented a solution of salts to rehydrate ancient tissues (some researchers today use fabric softener instead) and popularized the word "paleopathology."

The new field lost momentum, in the nineteen-twenties, when anthropologists demonstrated that much information can be gleaned from bones, which are far more plentiful than mummies. Leprosy, syphilis, and tuberculosis attack the eye sockets, the spine, and other skeletal parts in characteristic ways. With proper training, a scientist can look at ancient bones and determine whether the dead person had arthritis or vitamin deficiencies (and say whether he died from a wound inflicted by an axe or a blunt instrument). Even so, some eighty per cent of ailments—plague, aneurysms, measles, and many more—leave no marks on bone.

In the early seventies, researchers began to reëxamine the mummies exhumed in the nineteenth century with blood-antigen tests, electron microscopy, and other new techniques. Aufderheide knew none of the scientists who were doing this work, but he was determined to break into their circle. He spent several years writing letters to museums around the country, asking for access to their mummies, but he never got a positive response; they didn't want someone with a scalpel anywhere near their collections. While building up his mummy credentials, he studied bones and read esoteric archeological texts.

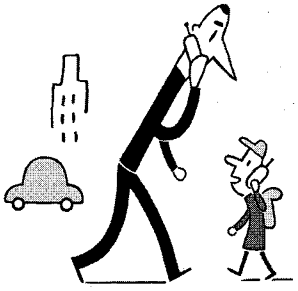
Aufderheide learned that some historians attributed the madness of Caligula, and even the decline of the Roman Empire, to poisoning from lead water pipes and wine additives, but that no one had ever proved these theories. Starting in the seventies, Aufderheide began following this trail, enlisting Lorentz Wittmers, a university physiologist, to design a new test that could detect lead in bone and, eventually, joining George Rapp, an archeologist at his university, in an effort to obtain bone bits collected from twenty Roman-era sites. This led, in 1992, to an article by Aufderheide and his colleagues in the *International Journal of Anthropology* which demonstrated conclusively that the Romans had ten times more lead in their bones than modern Duluthians did.

As his lead studies got under way, Aufderheide began attending whatever relevant scientific meetings he could find, and gradually became a presence in the field. In 1978, when Aufderheide was fifty-six, Michael Zimmerman, a pathologist at the University of Michigan, invited him to a double mummy dissection at Harvard University's Peabody Museum—a sort of modern unwrapping.

When Aufderheide arrived at Harvard, he saw, lying on two lab tables, the bodies of a young thousand-year-old Peruvian man and an elderly Aleut woman from the eighteenth century dressed in an ankle-length robe of sea-otter pelts. Gathered around them were twenty-five people, including physicians, reporters, photographers, and such scientific luminaries as Richard Evans Schultes, the Harvard ethnobotanist who was famous for collecting, and sampling, medicinal plants and hallucinogens acquired from Amazonian shamans. (Schultes wanted to know what plants the mummies' intestines held.) Aufderheide's role, he recalled, "was to stand by with my little drill, to drill some bones for lead."

The mummies were so dried and insubstantial that a grown person could easily have carried them both, one under each arm. The Peruvian man, who was curled in a fetal position, was "only moderately preserved," Aufderheide said. He watched as Zimmerman pulled a vibrating saw from a briefcase, then began cutting through the parched skin of the woman's chest. This procedure spewed a fine brown dust that settled on Aufderheide's oversized glasses and everything else. The doctors lifted the chest plate off and peered in. Inside was a lot of empty space. Then Aufderheide saw the mummy's heart, kidneys, and other organs, all of which had collapsed to the thickness and consistency of corrugated cardboard. "I don't know if I've ever been that excited by a body," he said. The scientists broke off pieces of the organs and passed them around. Aufderheide got some bone, muscle, heart, and intestine to take home.

The dissection revealed that the young man had survived a head injury: he had been hit with a stone from a slingshot. He also bore scars from a trephination, a nickel-size hole cut in his skull, made, perhaps, by a medicine man in an effort to cure him of headaches resulting from his injuries. The woman seemed to be fairly healthy, despite her age—possibly the benefit of an Aleut diet that was rich in seafood, the researchers speculated. "It reaffirmed my conviction that there had to be medical information in those tissues," Aufderheide told me.



Three years later, Zimmerman called Aufderheide to help with another autopsy, this time the frozen bodies of an Inuit family that had just been exhumed in Barrow, Alaska—an exceptional opportunity. In the Arctic, bodies are seldom interred more than a foot or two in the permafrost, and frost heaving usually pushes them to the surface, where they soon disintegrate.

Zimmerman and Aufderheide began by prying apart the bodies of two women which had frozen together. They found that the mummies were remarkably intact, right down to body fluids—which began dripping as the men thawed sections of the bodies with a hair dryer and began cutting. They found the ribs crushed, the hearts constricted, the chest cavities filled with bloody bubbles. They knew that the corpses had been discovered in a seaside dwelling that appeared to have been smashed; the bodies had been beneath fallen timbers, and one woman had thrown her arm up, as if to ward off a blow. The doctors concluded that the women had been crushed by an *ivu*—a giant chunk of sea ice propelled ashore by a spring storm. Radiocarbon dating indicated that they had lived around the beginning of the sixteenth century. Death had apparently occurred in the early morning: the women's stomachs were empty and their bladders were full. The autopsy also revealed significant information about Inuit health. One woman had scar tissue adhering a lung to her chest wall, which indicated that she had suffered from pneumonia but had recovered; she also had hardened arteries. The other woman's muscles carried trichinosis worms—the result, perhaps, of a raw-meat diet. Dissection of the lungs revealed a heavy film of soot: both women had severe black-lung disease, which, Aufderheide and Zimmerman concluded, must have been caused by living indoors all winter with a smoky seal-oil lamp. It was romantic to suppose that these native people had lived healthful outdoor lives. The mummies proved otherwise.

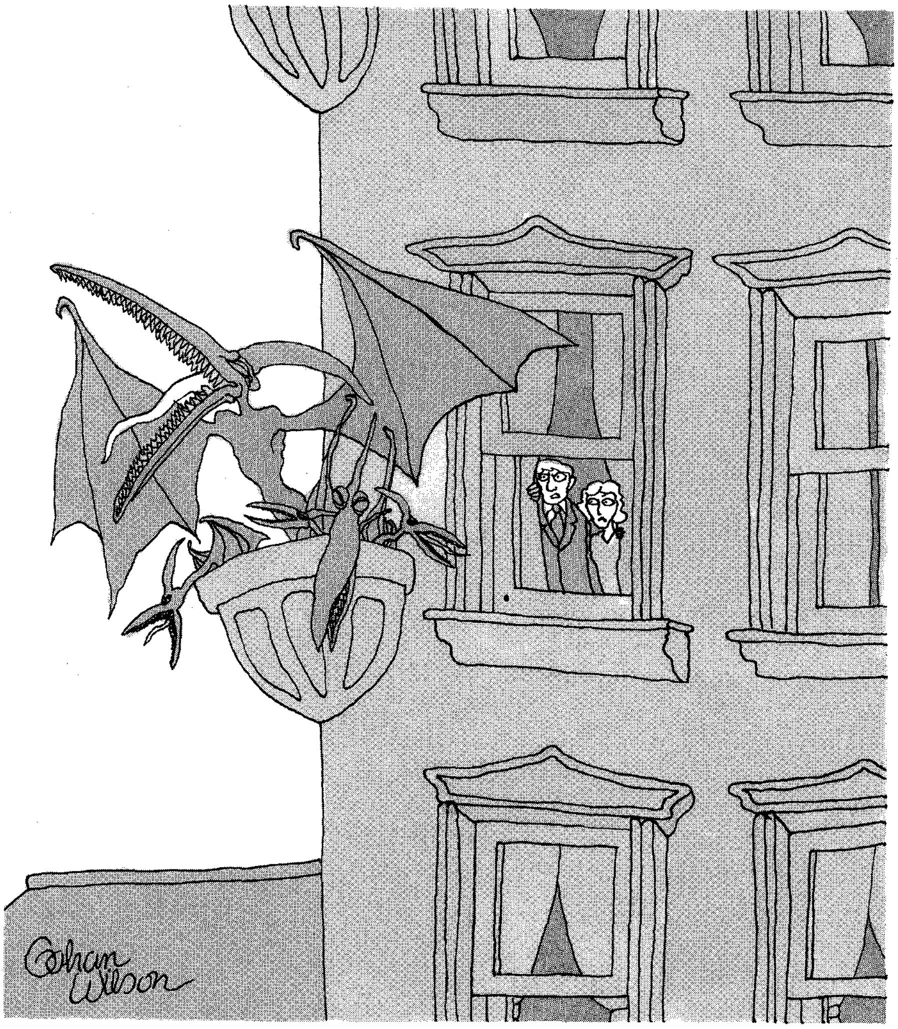
After a few such lucky finds, Aufderheide knew that he had to change his life. Meaningful studies of ancient epidemiology would require hundreds of samples. "I discovered that the big problem in studying mummies is finding them," he said. "You can't wait for bodies to come to you. You have to go looking for the bodies."

In 1985, having heard of untapped specimens in the Atacama and other regions in South America, he and Mary flew to Bogotá, Colombia. The next day, the Aufderheides hired a private guide to help them look for mummies; by evening, they had located sixty—in the museum, in church crypts, at the university. Local anthropologists, unlike their counterparts in North America, were eager to collaborate. When the Aufderheides went shopping for souvenirs at a fancy Bogotá shop, they saw three mannequins draped with replicas of pre-Columbian jewelry; as they stepped closer, they realized that the mannequins were mummies. "I knew we were in the right place," Aufderheide said.

With this trip, Mary became her husband's professional partner. Aufderheide spoke no Spanish; Mary had a talent for languages, and had just taken a crash course in Spanish. Stops in Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina yielded more mummies. They had their greatest success around Arica, a small Atacama Desert city in northern Chile, where Marvin Allison, a paleopathologist at Virginia Commonwealth University, had set up his own mummy-dissection operation. Here, mummies were akin to rocks in a New England field: renewable nuisances, always coming up underfoot in building foundations, water lines, and roadbeds. A local warehouse contained dozens of mummies—from members of the Chinchorro people, who lived thousands of years ago, to nineteenth-century settlers, who had been naturally preserved in their dry graves. The Chinchorro had painstakingly prepared their dead, including babies, often replacing vulnerable facial flesh with clay, which they painted with eyes and other features. Aufderheide was allowed to autopsy twenty-five mummies and to take home samples.

Mary assisted by scraping muscle and skin off bones, writing up labels, and dropping specimens into Whirl-Paks. "People asked me, 'How can you do that?,' but it's just like nursing," she told me. "I was enchanted—every body was different. And it kept us together." The Aufderheides frequently returned to South America, and, as Arthur's expertise and standing grew, he and Mary travelled to Spain and the Canary Islands, Hungary, Turkey, Australia, China, and Russia.

Aufderheide, a natural teacher, enlisted dozens of collaborators and disciples. Conrado Rodríguez-Martín, the director of the Canary Islands' Institute for Bioanthropology, said, "It's not just that Art created a new branch of science. It's his friendship. It's his attitude toward life. To many, he is like a father—to me, for sure." In 1992, the Canary Islands hosted the first World Congress on Mummy Studies. It was largely Aufderheide's idea, a way of bringing together members of a distinctly unorganized field. The congress continues to meet every few years.



"I'd complain, but I'm afraid of the bad press we'd get!"

Larry Cartmell, a middle-aged pathologist from Ada, Oklahoma, volunteered for a dig at Arica and ended up as one of Aufderheide's many apprentices. Forensic scientists had just developed a test that could pinpoint traces of cocaine in hair, and Aufderheide and Cartmell decided to investigate whether ancient Chileans had taken drugs. Hair tests on dozens of mummies definitively traced the movement of coca-chewing from the Andean highlands to the coasts, where, by the fourth century A.D., half the population was chewing the leaves—a contradiction of the earlier historical dogma that only aristocrats had indulged in this habit before the Spanish conquest.

Another follower, Derek Notman, a Minnesota radiologist, thought that he and Aufderheide could learn how to use modern medical imaging on human mummies by mummifying someone themselves. Aufderheide rejected this idea; he knew that the university would object. They settled on a forty-pound dog that was going to be put to sleep anyway. They stuffed the animal with natron, the salt used by the Egyptians; it gave off such a stench that it had to be sealed inside multiple garbage bags. After eight months, they had a pretty good mummy. They were able to use it to confirm that body-scanning machines accurately identified interior features useful for spotting lesions, swellings, and other abnormalities. Many investigators now routinely use computer-tomography scans to reveal the interior of mummies without dissection.

Such developments in imaging technology have, in recent years, made Aufderheide's work more controversial. Heather Pringle, a journalist who observed Aufderheide in the field, later questioned the practice of shredding bodies that had survived millennia. It "was a kind of sacrilege, like smashing a Ming vase in order to discover exactly how it was made," she wrote in her 2001 book "The Mummy Congress." Some colleagues feel that CT scans and other modern techniques are ready to superannuate the autopsy. Aufderheide, however, points out that many mummies that he has worked on would have been destroyed anyway, either torn up by looters or left to rot in poorly funded museums. And scientifically, he told me, the autopsy remains the "gold standard."

In the late eighties, Aufderheide began focussing on the paleopathology of tuberculosis. At the time, most scientists believed that the disease first emerged in Middle Eastern cows and spread to people with the development of agriculture. The orthodox theory was that the disease did not reach the New World until Europeans brought it—an idea that neatly explained why so many indigenous peoples died from t.b. and other allegedly imported pathogens, such as smallpox and malaria. Yet scientists had spotted bone lesions of the sort caused by t.b. in pre-Columbian mummies from South America, and sudden waves of deadly t.b. swept Europe for centuries after the Spanish conquest. This led researchers to wonder whether t.b. was far more ancient than it was generally believed to be, and whether the New World had sent its own lethal strains to infect the Old, as well as vice versa.

"We still don't understand the way many diseases behave on a grand scale," Aufderheide said. "Why does t.b. ebb and flow over time? Why do some people die of it, and others live? If you know how a disease evolved, you have a much better chance of developing a treatment or vaccine. Being able to test past populations will help us do that." As he points out, we still have no vaccine for t.b., and, after declining through most of the twentieth century, the disease is again on the rise. In the nineties, new drug-resistant strains evolved, encouraged by poorly supervised drug therapies and the spread of H.I.V. Some two million people now die annually of tuberculosis.

A major problem that paleopathologists face is the difficulty of making a definitive diagnosis. Tests for antibodies work only if antibodies are still present in the mummies, but often time has robbed them of these delicate molecules. And a disease can be suggested by visual signs but not necessarily confirmed; tuberculosis, for example, may mark the spine or the lungs, but similar lesions can be caused by other ailments.

In 1985, Svante Pääbo, a Swedish molecular biologist, sequenced fragments of human DNA from an Egyptian mummy. Most researchers saw this as an aid to charting human evolution. Aufderheide saw it as a prelude to charting the DNA of ancient pathogens—which would exponentially advance paleopathologists' ability to confirm diagnoses. This would not be an easy task, however: in addition to being tiny, germs have far fewer genes than humans do.

In 1990, Aufderheide was asked by Jane Buikstra, an archeologist who now teaches at the University of New Mexico, to examine some of the hundreds of bodies being excavated from several ancient cemeteries near Ilo, Peru. With Mary's help, he set up shop—a sheet of plywood atop two sawhorses—on the patio of a rural house that had been offered to the researchers by a copper-mining company. He awoke well before dawn every morning to eat a huge breakfast of eggs, bacon, hash browns, and coffee—often his only meal until quitting time—then went to work at the first hint of gray in the sky.

"I set up a sort of Henry Ford-type assembly line," Aufderheide told me. On the left, he draped a big blue tarp over some empty boxes, where he posed each mummy for exterior photographs. He told the workers to bring anything that was more than just bones. "About half were largely skeletons with ligaments and hair," he said. "The others had varying degrees of abdominal and thoracic organs." To the right of the blue tarp was the plywood, where Mary waited with the autopsy tools and the printed forms they would use for taking notes and making drawings. A family picture shows her standing over the table, wearing a flowery apron, a baseball cap, and a huge smile. ("We have been so lucky," she has said of their travels.)

Aufderheide started with a thorough visual exam—hairs might harbor ancient lice, scars might suggest old injuries—then he began cutting. To speed things along, he lined up a row of small cardboard boxes into which excised organs were dropped. Each box was designated for a different body part: hair, heart, lungs, liver, spleen, intestines, bladder, brain. Following each dissection, Aufderheide took photographs of the corpse's opened torso, then called for the workers to take the dissected mummy away, so that he could move on to the next one. This went on day after day, in the unblinking sun. Aufderheide wore a big floppy hat to protect his fair skin, but the hat got in his way, so he often took it off, and got blistered. He stopped as the last rays of sun faded behind the horizon. "I had to," he said. "There was no good electric illumination."

One day, Aufderheide removed the chest of a middle-aged woman who had died about a thousand years ago and noticed, clinging to her right lung and the attached lymph nodes, a hollow, calcified nodule about the diameter of a dime. He said to himself, "I bet that's Ghon's complex"—a kind of armor that the body builds around tissue killed by t.b. bacteria, in an effort to keep the germ from spreading. He carefully cut out the nodule.

Aufderheide brought the nodule to Wilmar Salo, a biochemist at the university in Duluth. After several false starts—DNA testing was still in its early days—Salo identified in the nodule ninety-seven base pairs of DNA that are peculiar to the human t.b. germ. In 1994, they published their findings in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, in an article called "Identification of Mycobacterium Tuberculosis DNA in a Pre-Columbian Peruvian Mummy." It was the first time that anyone had conclusively sequenced the DNA of an ancient pathogen—and the last time that scientists questioned the antiquity of t.b.

Subsequently modified hypotheses suggest that t.b.'s ancient reservoirs might include mice, llamas, and turkeys. Researchers working on other tissues from Hungary to Borneo have since found t.b. going back at least fifty-four hundred years. Aufderheide later supplied the mummy samples that resulted in a Colombian team's 1997 identification of ancient DNA from *Trypanosoma*

"I had another bad dream about Social Security."

cruzi, the parasite that causes Chagas' disease—the second pathogen so spotted. Other researchers have found fragments of malaria, leprosy, and bubonic plague in ancient Africa and Europe.

For most of his career, Aufderheide avoided working on Egyptian mummies, because of the Egyptians' habit of removing everything except the heart, which was thought to be the seat of the soul. But in 1993 he took part in a dig in the Dakhla Oasis, in the remote Sahara, after seemingly intact mummies were discovered there, and five years later he returned to investigate further. He was now seventy-six years old, three decades older than most of the other scientists there. Dakhla was situated on a forlorn plain of ruined cities and cemeteries, under a great sweep of red sand. Each morning, Aufderheide was dropped off at Ismant el-Kharab, known in ancient times as Kellis, which was occupied until the beginning of the fifth century. Many small tombs had been dug into a sandstone rock face. He crawled into the tombs and carried out forty-pound mummies, placing them on a couple of planks by a ruined mud-brick wall. The tombs were hiding places for cobras, and blackflies tormented him, but Dakhla had an eerie beauty that moved him.

Aufderheide and his fellow archeologists discovered that some mummies were actually composites of three or four people, which had apparently been reassembled from spare parts after ancient robbers raided the tombs for jewelry. The real treasure, for Aufderheide, was still there: livers, intestines, kidneys. He forwarded samples of these organs to the newly founded International Ancient Egyptian Mummy Tissue Bank, at the University of Manchester, in England, which until then had practically no organ samples.

Toward the close of the Dakhla dig, Aufderheide announced that this would be his last field season. Mary was tired of extreme travel, and had declined to accompany him. One afternoon, he performed his final dissection. "It was an emotional time, that last mummy," he recalled. "I'd started something from scratch, and watched it evolve into something useful. They asked if I wanted someone to come out and assist me. I said, 'No, I'd rather be out there alone.' "

The next morning, stratus clouds spanned the horizon as he watched the sun rise over the mausoleums. He thought about the Egyptian goddess Nut, the mother of the sun, and he thought about death. "I believe in the essence of a person while alive," he said. "But whether it survives I have grave reservations." Before he left, the field crew presented him with a yellow going-away cake in the shape of a mummy.

Today, Aufderheide focusses on his Duluth collection. He and his colleagues are searching for unique proteins secreted by infectious agents like the malaria parasite—molecules that may survive the ravages of time better than DNA, he believes, and that may open new avenues of scientific investigation. He is considering a study of ancient leishmaniasis, a parasitic protozoal disease that eats its victims' skin and mucosal tissues. And he is writing an anthropological book about overmodelled skulls, similar to those of the Chinchorro, that have ritually been supplemented with clay, wood, or other materials; they turn up in diverse cultures around the world. Aufderheide skied cross-country and canoed until two years ago, but he says that he now has little time for recreation. "I have no ambitions beyond what I'm doing," he told me.

Last summer, Aufderheide received a call from his friend Gino Fornaciari, a paleopathologist at the University of Pisa. Fornaciari has helped inspire a European mania for exhuming the remains of antique celebrities, including Petrarch and Giotto. (Such work has, for example, identified a cancer-causing gene mutation in a colon tumor that killed Ferdinand of Aragon, the king of Naples, in 1494.) Fornaciari asked Aufderheide to participate in the exhumation of forty-nine members of the Medici family from the family chapel in Florence. The team hopes to identify the diseases that afflicted these Renaissance rulers. It also seeks to confirm or disprove whether certain members of the notoriously violent clan were stabbed, poisoned, or bludgeoned to death, as history has alleged. (Grand Duke Cosimo I had one of many would-be assassins lacerated with red-hot pincers, dragged through Florence's streets by his ankles, and disembowelled.)

This past summer, after some squabbling among modern Medici descendants, Fornaciari and his colleagues pulled up desk-size marble slabs from the chapel floor and removed the first seven bodies. Soon afterward, Fornaciari sent Aufderheide a package containing three vertically sawed quarter-sections of vertebrae: one each from Eleonora de Toledo, Giovanni de' Medici, and Garzia de' Medici, the wife and two sons of Grand Duke Cosimo I. According to some accounts, they died when Garzia stabbed Giovanni, and Cosimo then stabbed Garzia; Eleonora was said to have died of grief. However, the bodies—reduced to bones—showed no signs of violence. Aufderheide and Wilmar Salo, the Duluth biochemist, were examining the vertebrae for malaria germs, which may have been common in Renaissance Italy, and, according to contemporary documents, might actually have killed all three. Even though these were not mummy parts, Aufderheide was excited by them; marrow is rich in blood, and blood carries malaria, which might give him a chance to test his new procedure for finding the proteins the parasite secretes.

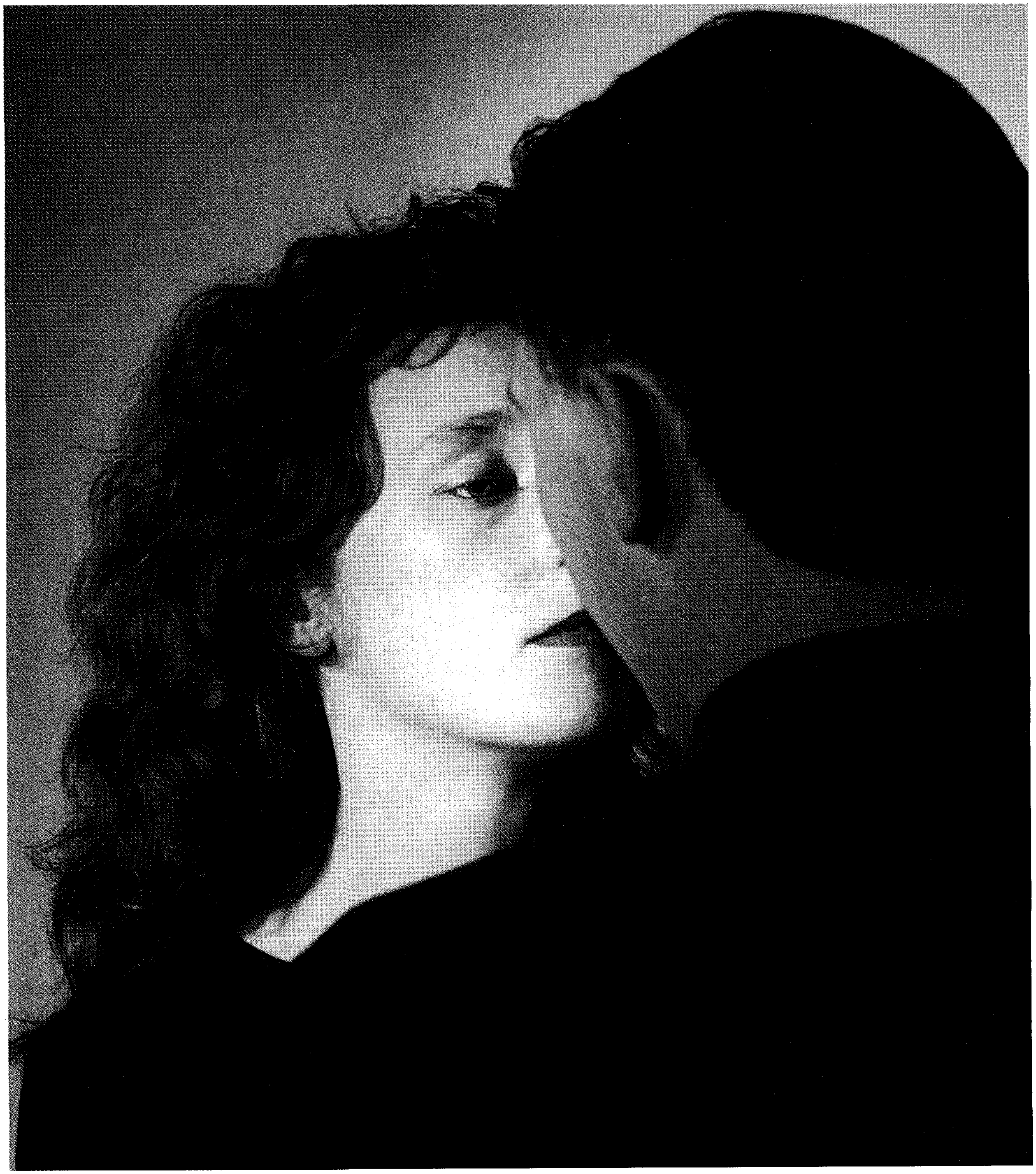
During my visit to his lab, Aufderheide retrieved the Medici vertebrae, which he kept inside an old one-gallon pickle jar, along with twelve Whirl-Paks of four-thousand-year-old coprolites from Chile. The fragments of Giovanni, Garzia, and Eleonora were in plastic test tubes: they were mellow-to-dark-brown, fingertip-size chunks, neatly sawed to expose the spongy marrow inside.

Aufderheide held up Giovanni's bone and rattled it around in its tube. I asked him if he got any special feeling from holding part of a historic personage. He winced slightly. "I know I'm supposed to say yes, but this is not the thing that excites me," he said. "I look at this, and I think about the problems of analysis." As for their lives and deaths, "I'm just getting acquainted with this family," Aufderheide said. "Maybe they weren't as bad as people say." ♦

FICTION

THE ROOM

BY WILLIAM TREVOR



"Do you know why you are doing this?" he asked, and Katherine hesitated, then shook her head, although she did know.

Nine years had almost healed a soreness, each day made a little easier, until the balm of work was taken from her and in her scratchy idleness the healing ceased. She was here because of that, there was no other reason she could think of, but she didn't say it.

"And you?" she asked instead.

He was at once forthcoming. He said he'd been attracted by her at a time when he'd brought loneliness upon himself by quarrelling once too often with the wife who had borne his children and had cared for him.

"I'm sorry about the room," he said.

His belongings were piled up, books and cardboard boxes, suitcases open, not yet unpacked. A word processor had not been plugged in, its cables trailing on the floor. Clothes on hangers cluttered the back of the door; an anatomical study of an elephant decorated one of the walls, with arrows indicating where certain organs were beneath the leathery skin. This gray picture wasn't his, he'd said when Katherine asked; it came with the room, which was all he had been able to find in a hurry. A sink was in the same corner as a washbasin, an electric kettle and a gas ring on a shelf, a green plastic curtain not drawn across.

"It's all a bit more special now that you're here," he said, sounding as if he meant it.

When she got up to put on her clothes, Katherine could tell he didn't want her to go. Yet he, not she, was the one who had to; she could have stayed all afternoon. Buttoning a sleeve of her dress, she remarked that at least she knew now what it felt like to deceive.

"What it had felt like for Phair," she said.

MITRA TABRIZIAN, CORRECT DISTANCE (1986)/STIDE

She pulled the edge of the curtain back a little more so that the light fell more directly on the room's single looking glass. She tidied her hair, still brown, no gray in it yet. Her mother's hadn't gone gray at all, and her grandmother's only when she was very old, which was something Katherine hoped she wouldn't have to be; she was forty-seven now. Her dark eyes gazed back at her from her reflection, her lipstick smudged, an emptiness in her features that had not to do with the need to renew her makeup. Her beauty was ebbing—but slowly, and there was beauty left.

"You were curious about that?" he asked, his own dressing complete. "Deception?"

"Yes, I was curious."

"And shall you be again?"

Still settling the disturbances in her face, Katherine didn't answer at once. Then she said, "If you would like me to."

Outside, the afternoon was warm, the street where the room was—above a betting shop—seemed brighter and more gracious than Katherine had noticed when she'd walked the length of it earlier. There was an afternoon tranquillity about it in spite of shops and cars. The tables were unoccupied outside the Prince and Dog, hanging baskets of petunias on either side of its regal figure, and a Dalmatian with a foot raised. There was a Costa Coffee next to a Prêt à Manger and Katherine crossed to it. "Latte," she ordered from the girls who were operating the Gaggia machines and picked out a florentine from the glass case on the counter while she waited for it.

She hardly knew the man she'd slept with. He'd danced with her at a party she'd gone to alone, and then he'd danced with her again, holding her closer, asking her her name and giving his. Phair didn't accompany her to parties these days and she didn't go often herself. But she'd known what she intended, going to this one.

The few tables were all taken. She found a stool at the bar that ran along one of the walls. "TEENAGERS' CURFEW!" a headline in someone else's evening paper protested, a note of indignation implied, and for a few moments she wondered what all that was about and then lost interest.

Phair would be quietly at his desk, in shirtsleeves, the blue-flecked shirt she'd ironed the day before yesterday, his crinkly, gingerish hair as it had been that morning when he left the house, his agreeable smile welcoming anyone who approached him. In spite of what had happened nine years ago, Phair had not been made redundant, that useful euphemism for being sacked. That he'd been kept on was a tribute to his success in the past, and of course it wasn't done to destroy a man when he was down. "We should go away," she'd said and remembered saying it now, but he hadn't wanted to, because running away was something that wasn't done, either. He would have called it running away; in fact, he had.

This evening, he would tell her about his day, and she would say about hers and would have to lie. And in turn they'd listen while she brought various dishes to the dining table, and he would pour her wine. None for himself because he didn't drink anymore, unless someone pressed him, and then only in order not to seem ungracious. "My marriage is breaking up," the man who'd made love to her in his temporary accommodation had confided when, as strangers, they had danced together. "And yours?" he'd asked, and she'd hesitated and then said no, not breaking up. There'd never been talk of that. And when they danced the second time, after they'd had a drink together and then a few more, he asked her if she had children and she said she hadn't. That she was not able to had been known before the marriage and then became part of it—as her employment at the Charterhouse Institute had been until six weeks ago, when the Institute had decided to close itself down.

"Idleness is upsetting," she had said while they danced, and had asked her future lover if he had ever heard of Sharon Ritchie. People often thought they hadn't and then remembered. He shook his head and the name was still unfamiliar to him when she told him why he might have heard of it. "Sharon Ritchie was murdered," she'd said, and wouldn't have without the few drinks. "My husband was accused."

She blew on the surface of her coffee, but it was still too hot. She tipped sugar out of its paper spill into her teaspoon and watched the sugar darkening when the coffee soaked it. She loved the taste of that, as much a pleasure as anything there'd been this afternoon. "Oh, suffocated," she'd said when she'd been asked how the person called Sharon Ritchie had died. "She was suffocated with a cushion." Sharon Ritchie had had a squalid life, living grandly at a good address, visited by many men.

Katherine sat a while longer, staring at the crumbs of her florentine, her coffee drunk. "We live with it," she had said when they left the party together, he to return to the wife he didn't get on with, she to the husband whose deceiving of her had ended with a death. Fascinated by that, an hour ago in the room that was his

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temporary accommodation her afternoon lover had wanted to know everything.

On the Tube, she kept seeing the room: the picture of the elephant, the suitcases, the trailing cables, the clothes on the back of the door. Their echoed voices, his curiosity, her evasions and then telling a little more because, after all, she owed him something. "He paid her with a check once—oh, ages ago. That was how they brought him into things. And when they talked to the old woman in the flat across the landing from Sharon Ritchie's she recognized him in the photograph she was shown. Oh, yes, we live with it."

Her ticket wouldn't operate the turnstile when she tried to leave the Tube station, and she remembered that she had guessed how much the fare should be and must have got it wrong. The Indian who was there to deal with such errors was inclined to be severe. Her journey had been different earlier, she tried to explain; she'd got things muddled. "Well, these things happen," the Indian said, and she realized his severity had not been meant. When she smiled, he didn't notice. That is his way, too, she thought.

She bought two chicken breasts, free-range, organic; and courgettes and fruit. She hadn't made a list as she usually did, and wondered if this had to do with the kind of afternoon it had been and thought it probably had. She tried to remember which breakfast cereals needed to be replenished but couldn't. And then remembered Normandy butter and tomatoes. It was just before five o'clock when she let herself into the flat. The telephone was ringing and Phair said he'd be a bit late, not by much, maybe twenty minutes. She ran a bath.

The tips of his fingers stroked the arm that was close to him. He said he thought he loved her. Katherine shook her head.

"Tell me," he said.

"I have, though."

He didn't press it. They lay in silence for a while.

Then Katherine said, "I love him more, now that I feel so sorry for him, too. He pitied me when I knew I was to be deprived of the children we both wanted. Love makes the most of pity, don't you think?"

"Yes. I do."

She told him more, and realized she wanted to, which she hadn't known before. When the two policemen had come in the early morning, she had not been dressed. Phair was making coffee. "Phair Alexander Warburton," one of them had said. She'd heard him from the bedroom, her bathwater still gurgling out. She'd thought they'd come to report a death, as policemen sometimes have to: her mother or Phair's aunt, his next of kin. When she went downstairs, they were talking about the death of someone whose name she did not know. "Who?" she asked, and the taller of the two policemen said Sharon Ritchie, and Phair said nothing. "Your husband has explained," the other man said, "that you didn't know Miss Ritchie." On a Thursday night, the eighth, two weeks ago, they said. What time—could she remember—had her husband come in?

She'd faltered, lost in all this. "But who's this person? Why are you here?" And the taller policeman said there were a few loose ends. "Sit down, Madam," his colleague put in, and she was asked again what time her husband had come in. A worse delay than usual on the Underground, he'd said that night, the Thursday before last. He'd given up waiting and had gone away, as everyone else was doing. And then it wasn't easy to get a taxi because of the rain. "You remember, Madam?" the taller policeman prompted, and something made her say Phair had come back at the usual time. She couldn't think; she couldn't because she was trying to remember if Phair had ever mentioned Sharon Ritchie. "Your husband visited Miss Ritchie," the same policeman said, and the other man's pager sounded and he took it to the window, turning his back to them. "No, we're talking to him now," he mumbled into it, keeping his voice low, but she could hear. "Your husband has explained it was the day before," his colleague said. "And earlier—in his lunchtime—that his last visit to Miss Ritchie was."

Remembering, Katherine wanted to stay here, in the room. She wanted to sleep, to be aware of the man she did not know well beside her, to have him waiting for her when she woke up. Because of the heat wave that had begun a week ago, he had turned the air-conditioning on, an old-fashioned contraption at the window.

"I have to go," he said.

"Of course. I won't be long."

Below them, another horse race had come to its exciting stage, the radio commentary faintly reaching them as they dressed. They went together down uncarpeted, narrow stairs, past the open door of the betting shop.

"Shall you come again?" he asked.

"Yes."

And they arranged an afternoon, ten days away, because he could not always just walk out of the office where he worked.

"Don't let me talk about it," she said before they parted. "Don't ask, don't let me tell."

"If you don't want to."

"It's all so done with. And it's a bore for you, or will be soon."

He began to say it wasn't, that was what the trouble was. She knew he began to say it because she could see it in his face before he changed his mind. And of course he was right; he wasn't a fool. Curiosity couldn't be just stifled.

They didn't embrace before he hurried off, for they had done all that. When she watched him go, it felt like a habit already, and she wondered as she crossed the street to the Costa café if, with repetition, her afternoons here would acquire some variation of the order and patterns of the work she missed so.

"Oh, none at all," she'd said when she'd been asked if there were prospects yet of something else. And wondered now if she would ever again make her morning journey across London, skillful in the overcrowded Tube stations, squeezing onto trains that were crowded also. It was unlikely that there'd be, somewhere, her own small office again, her position of importance, and generous colleagues who made up for a bleakness and kept at bay its ghosts. She hadn't known until Phair said, not long ago, that routine, for him, often felt like an antidote to dementia.

She should not have told so much this afternoon, Katherine said to herself, sitting where she had sat before. She had never, to anyone else, told anything at all, or talked about what had happened to people who knew. I am unsettled, she thought, and, outside, rain came suddenly, with distant thunder, ending the heat that had become excessive.

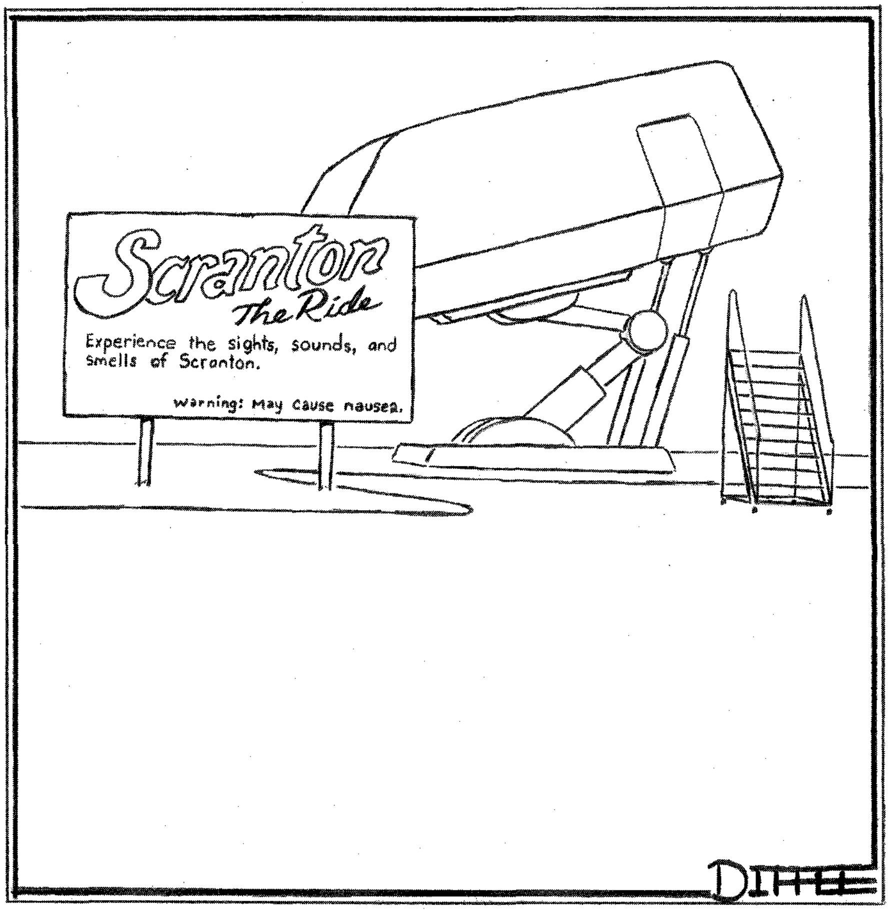
When she'd finished her coffee, Katherine didn't leave the café because she didn't have an umbrella. There had been rain in London that night, too. Rain came into it because the elderly woman in the flat across the landing had looked out when it was just beginning, the six-o'clock news on the radio just beginning, too. The woman had remembered that earlier she had passed the wide-open window half a flight down the communal stairway and went immediately to close it before, yet again, the carpet was drenched. It was while she was doing so that she heard the downstairs hall door opening and footsteps beginning on the stairs. When she reached her own door, the man had reached the landing. "No, I never thought anything untoward," she had later stated, apparently. Not anything untoward about the girl who occupied the flat across the landing, about the men who came visiting her. "I didn't pry," she said. She had turned round as she reached her own front door and had caught a glimpse of the man who'd come that night. She'd seen him before, the way he stood waiting for the girl to let him in, his clothes, his hair, even his footfall on the stairs: there was no doubt at all.

The café filled up, the doorway crowded with people sheltering, others queuing at the counter. Katherine heard the staccato summons of her mobile phone, a sound she hated, although originally she'd chosen it herself. A voice that might have been a child's said something she couldn't understand and then repeated it, and then the line went dead. So many voices were like a child's these days, she thought, returning the phone to her handbag. "A fashion, that baby telephone voice," Phair had said. "Odd as it might seem."

She nibbled the edge of her florentine, then opened the spill of sugar. The light outside had darkened and now was brightening again. The people in the doorway began to move away. It had rained all night the other time.

"Nothing again?" Phair always inquired when he came in. He was concerned about what had been so arbitrarily and unexpectedly imposed upon her, had once or twice brought back hearsay of vacancies. But even at his most solicitous, and his gentlest, he had himself to think about. It was worse for Phair and always would be, that stood to reason.

Her mobile telephone rang again and his voice said that in his lunch hour he'd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bought asparagus because he'd noticed it on a stall, looking good and not expensive. They'd mentioned asparagus yesterday, realizing it was the season; she would have bought some if he hadn't rung. “On the way out of the cinema,” she said, having already said that she'd just seen “La Strada” again. He'd tried for her an hour ago, he said, but her phone had been switched off. “Well, yes, of course,” he said.

Six months was the length of an affair that took place because something else was wrong: the man she met in the afternoons said that, knowing more about affairs than Katherine did. And, as if he had always been aware that he would, when a little longer than six months had passed he returned to his wife. Since then, he had retained the room while this reunion settled—or perhaps in case it didn't—but his belongings were no longer there. To Katherine, the room looked bigger, yet dingier, without them.

“Why do you love your husband, Katherine? After all this—what he has put you through?”

“No one can answer that.”

“You hide from one another, you and he.”

“Yes.”

“Are you afraid, Katherine?”

“Yes. Both of us are afraid. We dream of her, we see her dead. And we know in the morning if the other one has. We know and do not say.”

“You shouldn't be afraid.”

They did not ever argue in the room, not even mildly, but disagreed without pursuing their disagreements. Or failed to understand and left that, too. Katherine did not ask if a marriage could be shored up while this room was still theirs for a purpose. Her casual lover did not press her to reveal what she still withheld.

“I can't imagine him,” he said, but Katherine did not attempt to describe her husband, only commented that his first name suited him. A family name, she said.

“You're fairly remarkable, you know. To love him so deeply still.”

“And yet I'm here.”

“Perhaps I mean that.”

“More often than not, people don't know why they do things.”

“I envy you your seriousness. It's that I'd love you for.”

Once, when again he had to go, she stayed behind. He was in a hurry that day; she wasn't quite ready. “Just bang the door,” he said.

She listened to his footsteps clattering on the boards of the stairs and was reminded of the old woman saying she had recognized Phair's. Phair's lawyer would have asked in court if she was certain about that and would have wondered how she could be, since to have heard them on previous occasions she would each time have had to be on the landing, which surely was unlikely. He would have suggested that she appeared to spend more time on the communal landing than in her flat. He would have wondered that a passing stranger had left behind so clear an impression of his features, since any encounter there had been would have lasted hardly more than an instant.

Alone in the room, not wanting to leave it yet, Katherine crept back into the bed she'd left only minutes ago. She pulled the bedclothes up although it wasn't cold. The window curtains hadn't been drawn back and she was glad they hadn't. “I didn't much care for that girl,” Phair said when the two policemen had gone. “But I was fond of her in a different kind of way. I have to say that, Katherine. I'm sorry.” He had brought her coffee and made her sit there, where she was. Some men were like that, he said. “We only talked. She told me things.” A girl like that took chances every time she answered her doorbell, he said; and when he cried Katherine knew it was for the girl, not for himself. “Oh, yes, I understand,” she said. “Of course I do.” A sleazy relationship with a classy tart was what she understood, as he had understood when she told him she could not have children, when he'd said it didn't matter, although she knew it did. “I've risked what was precious,” her husband whispered in his shame, and then confessed that deceiving her had been an excitement, too. Risk came into it, Katherine realized then; risk was part of it, the secrecy of concealment, stealth. And risk had claimed its due.

The same policemen came back later. “You're sure about that detail, Madam?” they asked, and afterward, countless times, asked her that again, repeating the date and hearing her repeat that ten to seven was the usual time. Phair hadn't wanted to know—and didn't still—why she had answered as she had, why she continued to confirm that he'd returned ninety minutes sooner than he had. She couldn't have told anyone why, except to say that something like instinct came into it, and that she knew Phair as intimately as she knew herself, that it was impossible to imagine his taking the life of a girl no matter what his relationship with her had been. There was, of course—she would have said if she'd been asked—the pain of that relationship, of he and the girl being together, even if only for conversation. “You quarrelled, sir?” the tall policeman inquired. You could see there'd been a quarrel, he insisted, no way you could say there hadn't been a disagreement that got out of hand. But Phair was not the quarrelling sort. He shook his head. In all his answers, he hadn't disputed much except responsibility for the death. He had not denied he'd been a visitor to the flat. He gave the details of his visits as he remembered them. He accepted that his fingerprints were there, while they accepted nothing. “You're sure, Madam?” they asked again, and her instinct hardened, touched with apprehension, even though their implications were ridiculous. Yes, she was sure, she said. They said their spiel and then arrested him.

Katherine slept and when she woke did not know where she was. But only minutes had passed, less than ten. She washed at the basin in the corner, and slowly dressed. When he was taken from her, in custody until the trial's outcome, it was suggested at the institute that they could manage without her for a while. “No, no,” she had insisted. “I would rather come.” And in the hiatus that followed—long and silent—she had not known that doubt began to spread in the frail memory of the elderly woman, who in time would be called upon to testify to her statements on oath. She had not known that beneath the weight of importance the old woman was no longer certain that the man she'd seen on that wet evening—already shadowy—was a man she'd seen before. With coaching and encouragement, she would regain her confidence, it must have been believed by those for whom her evidence was essential: the prosecution case rested on identification, on little else. But the long delay had taken a toll, the witness had been wearied by preparation, and did not, in court, conceal her worries. When the first morning of the trial was about to end, the judge calmed his anger to declare that in his opinion there was no case to answer. In the afternoon, the jury was dismissed.

Katherine pulled back the curtains, settled her makeup, made the bed. Blame was there somewhere—in faulty recollection, in the carelessness of policemen, in a prosecution's ill-founded confidence—yet its attribution was hardly a source of satisfaction. Chance and circumstance had brought about a nightmare, and left it to a judge to deplore the bringing of a case that did not stand up. In dismissing it, his comments were stern, but neither that nor his perfect clarity was quite enough: too much was left behind. No other man was ever charged, although of course there was another man.

She banged the door behind her, as she'd been told to. They had not said goodbye, yet as she went downstairs, hearing again the muffled gabble of the racecourse commentator, she knew it was for the last time. The room was finished with. This afternoon, she had felt that, even if it had not been said.

She did not have coffee and walked by the Prince and Dog without noticing it. In her kitchen, she would cook the food she'd bought and they would sit together and talk about the day. She would look across the table at the husband she loved and see a shadow there. They would speak of little things.

She wandered, going nowhere, leaving the bustling street that was gracious also, walking by terraced houses, lace-curtained windows. Her afternoon lover would mend the marriage that had failed, would piece by piece repair the damage because damage was not destruction and was not meant to be. To quarrel often was not too terrible; nor, without love, to be unfaithful. They would agree that they were up to this, and friendly time would do the rest, not asked to do too much. "And she?" his wife one day might wonder, and he would say his other woman was a footnote to what had happened in their marriage. Perhaps that, no more.

Katherine came to the canal, where there were seats along the water. This evening, she would lie, and they would speak again of little things. She would not say she was afraid, and nor would he. But fear was there, for her the nag of doubt, infecting him in ways she did not know about. She walked on past the seats, past children with a nurse. A barge with barrels went by, painted roses on its prow.

A wasteland, it seemed like where she walked, made so not by itself but by her mood. She felt an anonymity, a solitude here where she did not belong, and something came with that which she could not identify. Oh, but it's over, she told herself, as if in answer to this mild bewilderment, bewildering herself further and asking herself how she knew what she seemed to know. Thought was no good: all this was feeling. So, walking on, she did not think.

She sensed, without a reason, the dispersal of restraint. And yes, of course, for all nine years there'd been restraint. There'd been no asking to be told, no asking for promises that the truth was what she heard. There'd been no asking about the girl, how she'd dressed, her voice, her face, and if she only sat there talking, no more than that. There'd been no asking about a worse day than usual on the Underground, and the waiting for a taxi in the rain. For all nine years, there had been silence in their ordinary exchanges, in conversation, in making love, in weekend walks and summer trips abroad. For all nine years, love had been there, and more than just a comforter, too intense for that. Was stealth an excitement still? That was not asked, and Katherine, pausing to watch another barge approaching, knew it never would be now. The flat was entered, and Sharon Ritchie lay suffocated on her sofa. Had she been the victim kind? That, too, was locked away.

Katherine turned to walk back the way she'd come. It wouldn't be a shock, nor even a surprise. He expected no more of her than what she'd given him, and she would choose her moment to say that she must go. He would understand; she would not have to tell him. The best that love could do was not enough, and he would know that also. ♦

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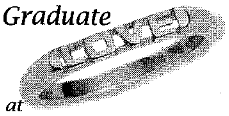

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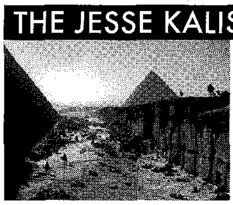
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A CRITIC AT LARGE

DAH-LING

The strange case of Tallulah Bankhead.

BY ROBERT GOTTLIEB

Most famous stage actors tactfully fade away. Who today is interested in Katharine Cornell, that First Lady of the American Theatre? Or that other First Lady, Helen Hayes? Or that First among Firsts, Ethel Barrymore? (Well, yes, she was the great-aunt of Drew.) Of the theatrical greats of their day, only Tallulah Bankhead, who died in 1968, has not gone gentle into oblivion. Since her death, there have been seven biographies, the latest, "Tallulah! The Life and Times of a Leading Lady," by Joel Lobenthal, published only this past fall. And her own book, "Tallulah," the No. 5 nonfiction best-seller of 1952 (No. 1 was the Revised Standard Version of the Bible; Whittaker Chambers's "Witness" was No. 9), is recently back in print.

Not many people remember Tallulah's stage performances, and almost nobody sees her few movies, yet here she is again, hectoring, demanding attention, catastrophically self-destructive; a star more than an actress, a personality more than a star, a celebrity before the phenomenon of celebrity had been identified. How appropriate that her final public appearance was on the "Tonight Show" (where she chatted with Paul McCartney and John Lennon). And what a complicated professional trajectory that suggests, given that her first real success—in London in 1923, forty years before the Beatles—was opposite Sir Gerald du Maurier, then the British theatre's leading matinée idol. ("Daddy," his daughter Daphne exclaimed, the first time she encountered Tallulah, "that's the most beautiful girl I've ever seen in my life.")

Tallulah, with her signature "dahling"s and her notorious peccadilloes and her endlessly caricaturized baritonal gurgle of a voice—a voice that the actor-writer Emlyn Williams said was "steeped as deep in sex as the human voice can go without drowning"—would be easy to dismiss as a joke if she hadn't also been a woman of outsize capacities. As it is, the story of her life reaches beyond gossip and approaches tragedy.

Tragedy, in fact, struck at the beginning. Her twenty-one-year-old mother—"the most beautiful thing that ever lived"—died of complications following Tallulah's birth, leaving her father, Will, so grief-stricken that he collapsed into a pattern of alcoholism, self-pity, and absence which lasted for years. The Bankheads of Alabama weren't rich, but they were aristocracy—Will Bankhead's father and brother were both United States senators—and the motherless Tallulah and her sister, Eugenia, were reared by their grandparents and aunts with strict guidelines (which they ignored) and a strong sense of privilege (which they indulged). Once Will pulled himself together, he went on to become a successful politician, ending as a much admired Speaker of the House under Roosevelt. Tallulah, in turn, was a lifelong passionate Democrat, and took credit—some of it deserved—for helping elect both Truman and Kennedy.

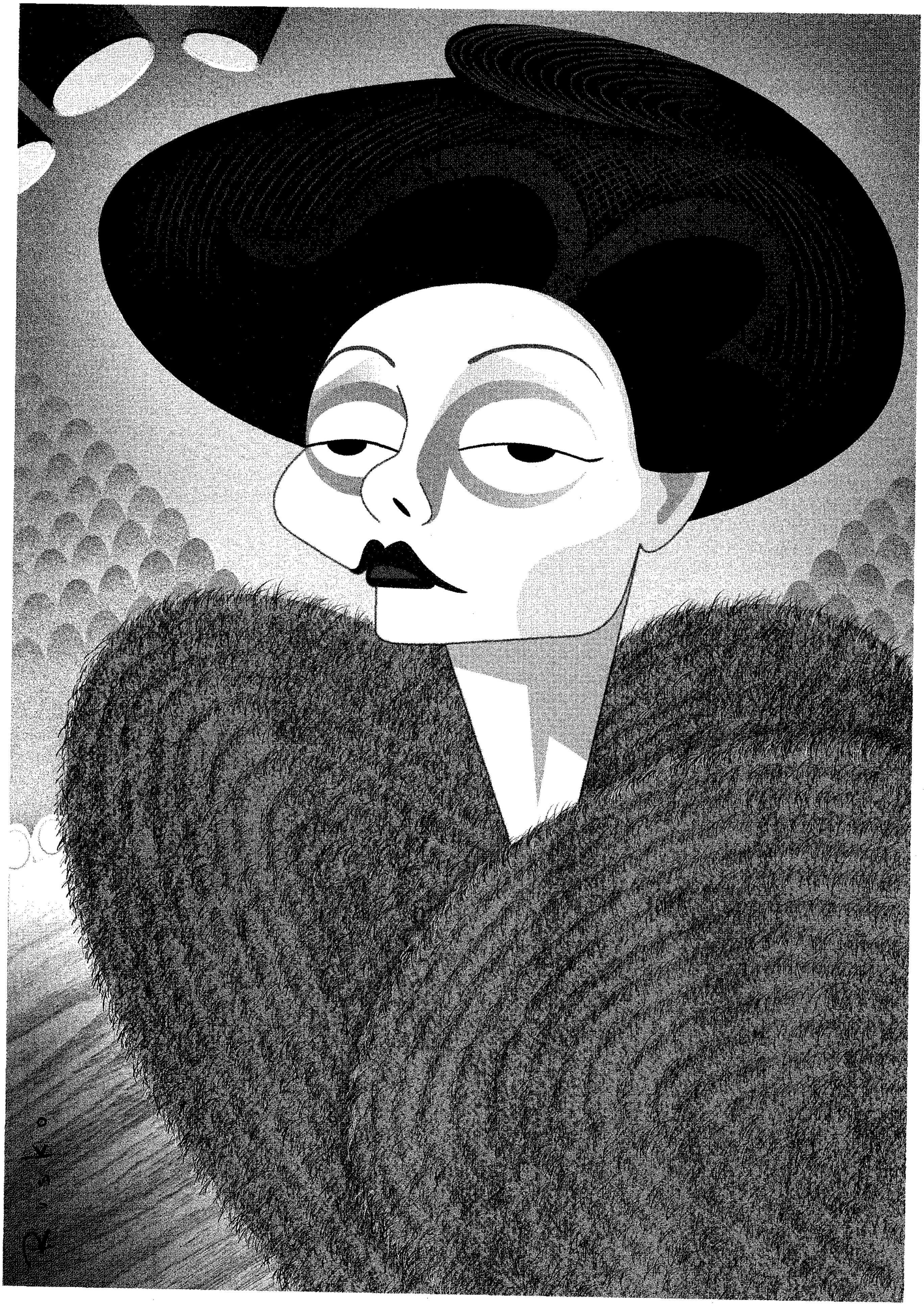
Politics was not the only passion that Tallulah inherited from her father—as a very young man, he had gone to Boston to try his luck as an actor. (He was hauled back home by a no-nonsense letter from his mother.) Even as a little girl, Tallulah was crazy to perform, and frequently when Will, somewhat the worse for drink, drifted home with his pals, he would lift her up onto the dining-room table and have her entertain the boys with risqué songs. She revelled in it. A plump child with startlingly gold hair, Tallulah was an exhibitionist from the beginning.

Another side of her dramatic temperament expressed itself in wild tantrums when she didn't get her way. ("To deny me anything only inflames my desire.") She would throw herself down, beat the floor, grow purple in the face, scream bloody murder. Her sister would hide in the closet, but her commonsensical grandmother simply flung a bucket of water in her face.

There were attempts at conventional education for the Bankhead girls. Eugenia, however, eloped in her débutante year with a boy she had met that day. As for Tallulah, at fifteen she convinced her family that she was born to be an actress, and her senatorial grandfather staked her to an assault on Broadway. Chaperoned by her Aunt Louise, she found herself living at the Algonquin Hotel in its early palmy days, and there she encountered the great and the near-great of the theatrical profession, including John Barrymore, who, true to form, tried to seduce her in his dressing room. She had no schooling as an actress and she lacked discipline, but she had vivid charm and looks, and she was absolutely determined to prevail. "I was consumed by a fever to be famous, even infamous," she wrote.

In her desperation to be noticed, she experimented with alcohol and cocaine, but her main shock tactics involved sex. Apparently, her first affair was with the celebrated actress Eva Le Gallienne, three years her senior, but although she liked to boast about her irregular love life—"I'm a lesbian," she announced to a stranger at a party. "What do you do?"—she also told a friend, "I could never become a lesbian, because they have no sense of humor!" Perhaps she found later women friends like Billie Holiday funnier than Le Gallienne. On the whole, though,

Tallulah: a star more than an actress, a personality more than a star, a celebrity before the phenomenon of celebrity had been identified.



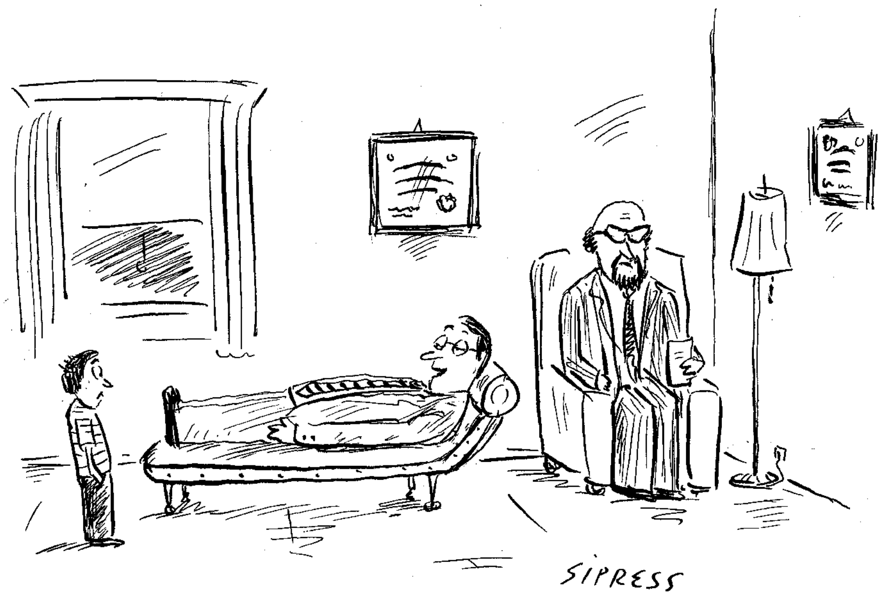
her taste was for men, and early on she met the man she undoubtedly cared for longest and most deeply, "Naps" Alington—Napier George Henry Sturt Alington, the third Alington baron—who was, in the words of Lee Israel, her most perceptive biographer, "a soft-spoken, blond tubercular—well cultivated, bisexual, with sensuous, meaty lips, a distant, antic charm, a history of mysterious disappearances, and a streak of cruelty."

Tallulah was generally out of funds, scrounging meals and running up bills at the Algonquin, whose long-suffering owner, Frank Case, announced at one point, "I can either run this hotel or look after Tallulah Bankhead. I can't do both." Although she was slowly progressing from walk-ons and small parts to leads in undistinguished plays, after some five years in New York the big breakthrough hadn't come, and she was frustrated, anxious, and broke. When the chance came to play opposite du Maurier in London, she leaped at what she saw as an opportunity to conquer the West End. (Hadn't a fashionable astrologer told her that her future lay across the Atlantic? "Go if you have to swim.") The play was called "The Dancers," and she was Maxine, a Canadian saloon dancer who eventually marries Tony the bartender, who turns out to be the Earl of Chively. With her glorious hair, her unique voice and accent, her unrestrained dancing and cartwheeling (during her English career, she cartwheeled whenever the script allowed, and sometimes when it didn't), she did indeed conquer the West End.

Throughout the ten-month run of "The Dancers," a group of rabid young women gathered nightly up in the gallery to express their love for their heroine by screaming, stomping, throwing flowers. Within three years, she had attracted the most loyal—and vociferous—following in London. Observing this phenomenon, Arnold Bennett noted, "Ordinary stars get 'hands.' If Tallulah gets a 'hand' it is not heard. What is heard is a terrific, wild, passionate, hysterical roar and shriek. Only the phrase of the Psalmist can describe it: 'God is gone up with a shout.'" She informed a reporter from New York, "Over here they like me to 'Tallulah.' You know—dance and sing and romp and fluff my hair and play reckless parts." She had become a verb!

During her London years, Tallulah appeared in sixteen plays, ranging from outright junk ("Conchita," "The Creaking Chair," "Mud and Treacle") to the Pulitzer Prize-winning "They Knew What They Wanted." She missed playing Sadie Thompson in Somerset Maugham's "Rain" when Maugham nixed her at the last minute, making her so despondent that she thought she'd give suicide a try, and, according to Lobenthal, "swallowed twenty aspirins, scribbled a suicide note—'It ain't goin' to rain no moh'—and lay down on her intended bier." The next morning, feeling fine, she was wakened by a phone call begging her to step into a leading role in Noël Coward's "Fallen Angels."

Her life in London was hardly restricted to work. She was as famous for her shenanigans offstage as for her flamboyant performances. In her autobiography, she confides, "Have I darkly hinted that for eight years I cut a great swath in London? Well I damned well did, and it was all a spur to my ego, electrifying! London beaux clamored for my company." Her highly publicized flings extended from the tennis champion Jean Borotra to Lord Birkenhead to a fraudulent Italian aristocrat whom she almost married. And, of course, Napier Alington was always on her mind and often in her bed.



"*Someday, this will all be yours.*"

But as the decade drew to a close she decided that it was time to go home: she was approaching thirty, Naps was marrying the daughter of an earl, and she was out of money, since she always spent everything she earned, and then some. And suddenly the way was open to her, via an extraordinary offer from Paramount, beginning at five thousand dollars a week. This was the moment when, with the recent coming of sound, Hollywood was signing up every attractive stage star it could find, and the exotic Tallulah, with her husky seductive voice, could well prove to be the next Garbo, the next Dietrich. "Hollywood for me I'm afraid," she wrote to her father and, in January, 1931, embarked for New York.

In a year and a half, Bankhead made six feature films (and a lot of money), but none of them really worked. It didn't matter whether she was leaping off a balcony rather than go back to her blind husband, escaping from a submarine that her crazed husband had sabotaged, or going on the streets to procure money for the medicine needed by her desperately ill husband—reviewers said either that she was wasted on such clichéd vehicles or that she didn't live up to the better of them. The bottom line is that audiences just didn't take to her. George Cukor, who directed her once, concluded that she wasn't naturally photogenic: "On the screen she had beautiful bones, but her eyes were not eyes for movies. They looked somehow hooded and dead." The reality was that she was first and always a creature of the stage, all about projecting her larger-than-life personality at an audience, never about allowing a camera to explore her face and reveal her feelings. The movies caged and suppressed her. (They did the same thing to another stage phenomenon, Ethel Merman.) Bette Davis, who clearly had benefitted from studying her speech patterns and vocal mannerisms, burned up the screen; Tallulah doused it.

She did, however, have fun in Hollywood, what with her Rolls, her suntan, and her non-stop parties. Joan Crawford reminisced, "We all adored her. We were fascinated by her, but we were scared to death of her, too. . . . She had such authority, as if she ruled the earth, as if she was the first woman on the moon." There were the usual sexual escapades, including an encounter with Johnny (Tarzan) Weissmuller in the Garden of Allah pool, about which she reported that she had been "a very satisfied Jane." Yet the biggest scandal she created was a remark she tossed off in an interview: "I haven't had an *affaire* for six months. Six months! Too long. . . . I WANT A MAN." This was not the kind of publicity the studios—or the Hays office—could condone, and it helped send her back to Broadway (with her earnings of two hundred thousand dollars).

For half a dozen years, she failed at everything she tried on the stage, most spectacularly in 1937, when she had the calamitous misjudgment to take on "Antony and Cleopatra": she had no classical technique, and she refused to be coached. The text was butchered, too—in the climactic scene, for instance, the deaths of Cleopatra's handmaidens were eliminated ("Because, of course, darling, we only want one death in that scene!"). One critic wrote that she was "more a serpent of the Swanee than of the Nile"; another famously quipped, "Tallulah Bankhead barged down the Nile last night as Cleopatra—and sank."

Also trapped in this disaster was a second-rank actor named John Emery, whom Tallulah had picked up on the summer circuit and, rather casually, married. Emery was good-looking, capable, and amiable. Best of all, he bore a marked resemblance to John Barrymore, and not only in profile: years earlier, when Barrymore revealed himself to her in his dressing room, Tallulah had sworn to herself (and anyone within earshot) never to sleep with any man who wasn't "hung like Barrymore," and went on to claim that she had stuck to her word. (Since she also claimed five hundred or more conquests, perhaps she wasn't always so picky.) One of Tallulah's party tricks was to escort guests to the master bedroom, fling back the covers from the bed in which Emery was sleeping, and crow, "Did you ever see a prick as big as that before?" So size mattered, but eventually, in his case, not enough. Soon she was telling people, "Well, darling, the weapon may be of admirable proportions, but the shot is indescribably weak." Within a few years, the marriage, such as it was, was over.

During the thirties, Tallulah had entered the hospital for what was announced as an "abdominal tumor" but was actually a case of gonorrhea—contracted, she was to say, from George Raft—so violent it brought her close to death. It led to a five-hour radical hysterectomy, and by the time she left the hospital she was down to seventy pounds. Undaunted, she announced to her doctor, "Don't think this has taught me a lesson!" The hysterectomy left her not only psychologically shaky but erotically diminished—again and again, she testified to her lack of physical pleasure, telling Tennessee Williams's friend Sandy Campbell, for instance, that she couldn't reach an orgasm with any man she was in love with. (She gave as an example the multimillionaire Jock Whitney.) Louise Brooks reported to Kenneth Tynan, "I always guessed that she wasn't as interested in bed as everyone thought." Apparently, Tallulah cared more about the act of conquest than about the sexual act itself.

Another aspect of her pathology was her unrestrained exhibitionism. She was famous for throwing off her clothes at parties, for leaving her bathroom door open, for working without panties on. When she was performing in Thornton Wilder's "The Skin of Our Teeth," so many people in the audience complained that Actors' Equity had to order her to wear underpants onstage. When she was making "Lifeboat," Alfred Hitchcock, as Lobenthal puts it, fielded complaints "with his much-quoted deliberation about whether the matter needed to be referred to the makeup or the hairdressing department."

In the late thirties, after the failure of her vigorous campaign to secure the role of Scarlett in "Gone with the Wind," her luck changed. Her commanding performance in Lillian Hellman's "The Little Foxes," as a malevolent Southern matron who stands by coldly while her husband dies, riveted Broadway. A month after the opening, in March, 1939, she was on the cover of *Life*, and the text of the accompanying story was unambiguous: "Somehow it seemed impossible to find adequate parts for this strange electric woman with the languid eyes, the panther's step and the siren's husky voice. But now . . . she fills, for the first time, a role carved big and fierce enough for her talent." Her triumph was unalloyed, except for the fury and chagrin she felt at losing the film version to Bette Davis.

Late in 1942, she opened in the allegorical "Skin of Our Teeth," playing the immortal temptress Sabina in the various guises of housemaid, beauty-contest winner, and camp follower. This demanding role gave her a chance to display her rollicking humor and her allure and gave her a second Broadway triumph. And soon she was playing a famous journalist in that claustrophobic wartime drama "Lifeboat." "It was the most oblique, incongruous bit of casting I could think of," Hitchcock later said. "Isn't a lifeboat in the middle of the Atlantic the last place one would expect Tallulah?" Yes. But she carried it off (if somewhat heavily), and was rewarded by the New York Film Critics Circle, which named her the Best Actress of 1944. There was only one more important film, a year later—"A Royal Scandal," which sank under the weight of Otto Preminger's direction and her own somewhat labored performance as Catherine the Great.

These years that established her as a major force on Broadway also saw the development of Tallulah's serious interest in politics and world affairs. At the time of Dunkirk, she swore not to have another drink until the Allies were back in Paris, and she more or less kept her word. On the home front, she campaigned for every Democrat in sight and helped her friend Eleanor Roosevelt set up the Washington branch of the Stage Door Canteen. In the early fifties, at the height of Joseph McCarthy's influence, she pulled no punches about her loathing of him: "I think Senator McCarthy of Wisconsin is a disgrace to the nation." She was also a passionate anti-Communist.

From the start, her political mentor had been her father—he died in 1940—but although she always claimed that he was the most important figure in her life, the reality is that they never were comfortable with each other and spent almost no time together. Lobenthal is convincing when he says that the "paper trail records her attempts to put definite boundaries around their relationship. . . . Yet when she did write, her invariable recitation of only good news also tells us how much she sought his approval." Nor were her relationships with the rest of her family any less complicated.

Now, however, she found a new family. A young actress named Eugenia Rawls, who was playing her daughter in "The Little Foxes," became an integral part of her life. She made Rawls's husband her lawyer (he won her a large settlement when she sued the makers of Prell shampoo for presuming to use the name Tallulah in an advertising jingle), and stood as godmother to the couple's two children, eventually leaving each of them a quarter of her (large) estate. In an affecting book, Rawls demonstrates that she both loved and understood the older woman: "Tallulah could be savage, her appetites of mind and body wild and sometimes gross, as if everything had to be possessed and devoured and destroyed. And none of this mattered. It was as though all dross burned away, leaving someone frail and loyal, eager to please."

In 1948, Tallulah turned up on Broadway in a revival of Noël Coward's "Private Lives," which for some time she had been playing occasionally in summer stock, and which she went on playing, across the country, until 1950. This was the one stage performance of hers I saw, and she put on quite a show. It wasn't Noël Coward's show but her own outrageous, rampageous eruption of high camp and low comedy. Audiences ate it up—Coward, predictably, didn't—and it made her a fortune, but it was her last hit in the theatre. (Let's pass over a series of insignificant comedies and the disaster of Cocteau's "The Eagle Has Two Heads," from which she had the young Marlon Brando fired, and the debacle of her revival of "A Streetcar Named Desire.") There were several inconclusive cabaret engagements and countless radio and TV appearances, but it was all small potatoes compared with her glory days. In her final eighteen years—and she was only sixty-six when she died—she had only two real successes, both in the early fifties, and neither was on the stage or the screen.

In 1950, Tallulah ushered out commercial radio with a bang as the m.c. of a weekly hour-and-a-half extravaganza called "The Big Show." To everybody's surprise, including her own, it not only was hailed by critics as the potential savior of radio but was an immediate hit. (A friend of mine says it awakened his "sequin gene.") Listening to air checks of "The Big Show" today is like slipping through a crack in time: Ethel Merman is plugging "Call Me Madam" and trading insults with "Tallu"; beloved Jimmy Durante is making a hash of his lines; Groucho Marx is singing "Some Enchanted Evening" with a Yiddish accent; Bob Hope is cracking Jack Benny jokes; Tallulah is cracking Bette Davis jokes when she isn't reciting Dorothy Parker monologues. You rise to her generosity, her sense of fun, her self-deprecation, her giggle—and her unerring timing. This was a deserved but short-lived success, as radio inevitably lost out to television.

And then, in 1952, came her book. Prickly, honest (for its day), and amusing, it made a sensation. Who else would have written about her marriage, "My interests and enthusiasms are too random for sustained devotion, if you know what I mean. . . . I had roamed the range too long to be haltered." She had help putting the book together from tapes, but its manic, bravura style is pure Tallulah.

As she passed the age of fifty, Tallulah's demons grew stronger. She had always been a heavy drinker; now she was consuming a quart of bourbon a day, together with a dangerous mixture of Tuinal, Benzedrine, Dexedrine, Dexamyl, and morphine. She had always been insomniac; now she was frantic for sleep—as far back as 1948 she had been observed knocking back five Seconals and a brandy chaser after a night of drinking. She couldn't bear to be alone: friends, colleagues, servants, and the young men she attached to her and whom she called her "caddies" would be wheedled or ordered to sit on her bed (or lie in her bed) all night while she struggled for sleep. She couldn't stop talking—someone followed her around one day and claimed that she had racked up seventy thousand words, the length of a novel. (No wonder the songwriter Howard Dietz commented, "A day away from Tallulah is like a month in the country.") Lobenthal writes of "bills for rolls and rolls of three-inch adhesive tape" observed in her hotel suite. It turned out that her maid was taping her wrists together at night to keep her from taking more pills during her intervals of wakefulness. One night, a colleague saw her in a hotel hallway, "a wild woman, like a caged chimp." Lobenthal continues, "Straggle-haired, barely wrapped in a thin robe, she flailed at the walls, sputtering 'Where am I?' " There were serious accidents and psychotic episodes; she was violent under sedation.

Orson Welles called her "the most sensational case of the aging process being unkind. I'll never forget how awful she looked at the end and how beautiful she looked at the beginning." At least her sense of humor didn't desert her: when people on the street asked, "Aren't you Tallulah Bankhead?," she'd answer, "I'm what's left of her, darling."

For years, she had said that she wanted to die. Once, playing the Truth Game with Tennessee Williams, she confessed, "I'm fifty-four, and I wish always, always, for death. I've always wanted death. Nothing else do I want more." It was a dozen years later, in 1968, that she finally got her way, quickly succumbing to double pneumonia. Her last words were "codeine—bourbon."

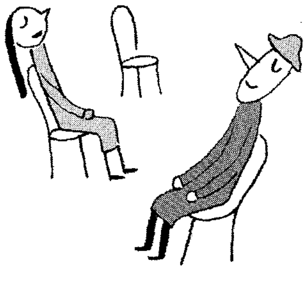
Not one of Tallulah's most important rivals crashed and burned the way she did; even the alcoholic Laurette Taylor redeemed her lost decades with her unforgettably great performance in "The Glass Menagerie." But then the others—Katharine Cornell, Helen Hayes, Ethel Barrymore, Lynn Fontanne, Eva Le Gallienne—were first and foremost actresses. They obsessed over their craft; they led relatively regular lives, conserving their energy for their work. Tallulah substituted personality for technique and eccentricity for effort, wasting her abundant talent—the predictable result of ignored guidelines and indulged sense of privilege. And since she was intelligent, she must have been aware of the waste. No wonder she despaired.

So what is left to us of this "Humphrey Bogart in silk panties," this "most thoroughgoing libertine and free-swinging flapper of the age"? "The Little Foxes," to theatre buffs; "Lifeboat," to film buffs; a faint memory of a rowdy life and a purring drawl of a voice. Her latest chronicler, Joel Lobenthal, doesn't really make her come alive, but he cares for her, defends her talent, sympathizes rather than condemns. Surely now it's time to let her rest. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

Swing, *by Rupert Holmes (Random House; $24.95).* This second mystery novel by a noted songwriter and playwright is set in 1940, at the height of the big-band era, and its protagonist is a talented but troubled saxophonist beginning an engagement at a swank hotel. Approached by a fetching music student to arrange her prize-winning composition, he quickly finds himself in a complicated world of murder and espionage, as America prepares for war. Holmes's narrative is saturated in the atmosphere of noir and swing, and he has even recorded an accompanying CD of jazzy numbers containing musical clues. The story moves jauntily, its set pieces staged with theatrical flair and its snappy dialogue recalling Ben Hecht's. The plot ultimately seems a trifle creaky, but Holmes's stylish sense of ambience and his lightness of touch more than make up for it.

A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian, *by Marina Lewycka (Penguin; $24.95).* In this comic first novel, two estranged sisters living in England discover that their addled elderly father, a Ukrainian war refugee and expert on tractors, is planning to marry a young, enormous-breasted woman who sees his modest pension as her ticket to capitalist comfort. The sisters put aside their differences, and embark on a spirited campaign to save him from boil-in-the-bag dinners, slovenly housekeeping, and such extravagant purchases as a broken-down Rolls-Royce. In the midst of these machinations—which include long-winded letters to solicitors, venomous gossip, and all-out spying—Lewycka stealthily reveals how the depredations of the past century dictate what a family can bear.



The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906, *by Philip L. Fradkin (California; $27.50).* The earthquake and fires that decimated San Francisco in April, 1906, constitute this country's worst urban catastrophe to date. More than five hundred city blocks were flattened or burned. Fradkin's account starts out as an environmental history but evolves into a parable about human response to cataclysm. Drawing on previously untapped archival sources, he argues that much more damage than previously supposed was the result of incompetence. Once the ground stopped shaking and the first fires started, firefighters, soldiers, and civilians dynamited buildings across the city to create firebreaks; in the process, they fanned more flames than they slowed. When the last embers were extinguished, the dash to rebuild began. With it came efforts to downplay the dangers of shoddily reconstructing a compact city on such precarious ground. The city's boosters even moved to rename the Great Earthquake the Great Fire, hoping that outsiders would find fire less alarming than unpredictable roiling of the earth.

Charlotte, *by Kathryn Shevelow (Henry Holt; $27.50).* Charlotte Charke, the daughter of the eighteenth-century actor and poet laureate Colley Cibber, was an actress who specialized in "breeches parts," roles in which female characters wore men's clothing. She extended this practice into her everyday life by renouncing hoops and stays to dress full-time as a man. Shevelow engagingly details Charlotte's adventures as a waiter, manservant, and actor, and her travels around England with a female companion known to history only as "Mrs. Brown." Concrete evidence for Charlotte's life is sometimes frustratingly scant, but Shevelow compensates with evocative descriptions of London playhouses and makeshift rural stages. Always desperate for money, Charlotte published an autobiography, hoping to capitalize on the public's appetite for sensational stories. In it she concealed as much as she explained about her motives for cross-dressing, but Shevelow concludes that she was most at home in a world where artifice was valued for its ability to deceive and delight.

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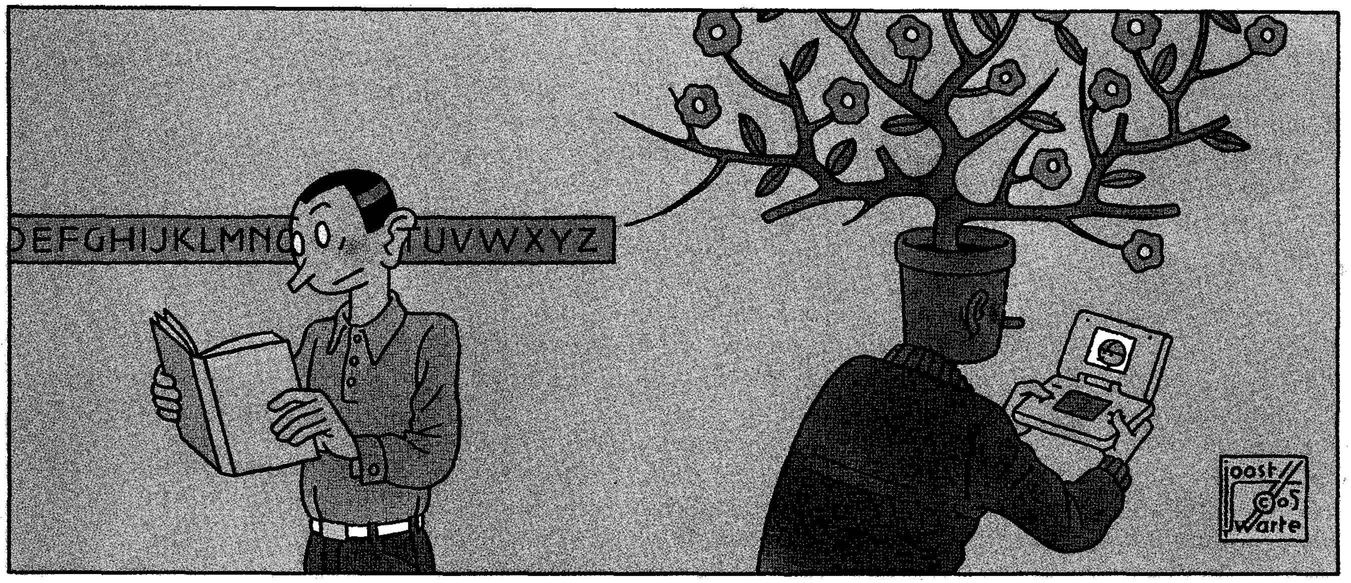
BOOKS

BRAIN CANDY

Is pop culture dumbing us down or smartening us up?

BY MALCOLM GLADWELL



If video games had been invented first, Johnson suggests, cultural critics would dismiss books as "simply a barren string of words."

Twenty years ago, a political philosopher named James Flynn uncovered a curious fact. Americans—at least, as measured by I.Q. tests—were getting smarter. This fact had been obscured for years, because the people who give I.Q. tests continually recalibrate the scoring system to keep the average at 100. But if you took out the recalibration, Flynn found, I.Q. scores showed a steady upward trajectory, rising by about three points per decade, which means that a person whose I.Q. placed him in the top ten per cent of the American population in 1920 would today fall in the bottom third. Some of that effect, no doubt, is a simple by-product of economic progress: in the surge of prosperity during the middle part of the last century, people in the West became better fed, better educated, and more familiar with things like I.Q. tests. But, even as that wave of change has subsided, test scores have continued to rise—not just in America but all over the developed world. What's more, the increases have not been confined to children who go to enriched day-care centers and private schools. The middle part of the curve—the people who have supposedly been suffering from a deteriorating public-school system and a steady diet of lowest-common-denominator television and mindless pop music—has increased just as much. What on earth is happening? In the wonderfully entertaining "Everything Bad Is Good for You" (Riverhead; $23.95), Steven Johnson proposes that what is making us smarter is precisely what we thought was making us dumber: popular culture.

Johnson is the former editor of the online magazine *Feed* and the author of a number of books on science and technology. There is a pleasing eclecticism to his thinking. He is as happy analyzing "Finding Nemo" as he is dissecting the intricacies of a piece of software, and he's perfectly capable of using Nietzsche's notion of eternal recurrence to discuss the new creative rules of television shows. Johnson wants to understand popular culture—not in the postmodern, academic sense of wondering what "The Dukes of Hazzard" tells us about Southern male alienation but in the very practical sense of wondering what watching something like "The Dukes of Hazzard" does to the way our minds work.

As Johnson points out, television is very different now from what it was thirty years ago. It's *harder*. A typical episode of "Starsky and Hutch," in the nineteen-seventies, followed an essentially linear path: two characters, engaged in a single story line, moving toward a decisive conclusion. To watch an episode of "Dallas" today is to be stunned by its glacial pace—by the arduous attempts to establish social relationships, by the excruciating simplicity of the plotline, by how *obvious* it was. A single episode of "The Sopranos," by contrast, might follow five narrative threads, involving a dozen characters who weave in and out of the plot. Modern television also requires the viewer to do a lot of what Johnson calls "filling in," as in a "Seinfeld" episode that subtly parodies the Kennedy assassination conspiracists, or a typical "Simpsons" episode, which may contain numerous allusions to politics or cinema or pop culture. The extraordinary amount of money now being made in the television aftermarket—DVD sales and syndication—means that the creators of television shows now have an incentive to make programming that can sustain two or three or four viewings. Even reality shows like "Survivor," Johnson argues, engage the viewer in a way that television rarely has in the past:

> When we watch these shows, the part of our brain that monitors the emotional lives of the people around us—the part that tracks subtle shifts in intonation and gesture and facial expression—scrutinizes the action on the screen, looking for clues. . . . The phrase

> "Monday-morning quarterbacking" was coined to describe the engaged feeling spectators have in relation to games as opposed to stories. We absorb stories, but we second-guess games. Reality programming has brought that second-guessing to prime time, only the game in question revolves around social dexterity rather than the physical kind.

How can the greater cognitive demands that television makes on us now, he wonders, not *matter*?

Johnson develops the same argument about video games. Most of the people who denounce video games, he says, haven't actually played them—at least, not recently. Twenty years ago, games like Tetris or Pac-Man were simple exercises in motor coördination and pattern recognition. Today's games belong to another realm. Johnson points out that one of the "walk-throughs" for "Grand Theft Auto III"—that is, the informal guides that break down the games and help players navigate their complexities—is fifty-three thousand words long, about the length of his book. The contemporary video game involves a fully realized imaginary world, dense with detail and levels of complexity.

Indeed, video games are not games in the sense of those pastimes—like Monopoly or gin rummy or chess—which most of us grew up with. They don't have a set of unambiguous rules that have to be learned and then followed during the course of play. This is why many of us find modern video games baffling: we're not used to being in a situation where we have to figure out what to do. We think we only have to learn how to press the buttons faster. But these games withhold critical information from the player. Players have to explore and sort through hypotheses in order to make sense of the game's environment, which is why a modern video game can take forty hours to complete. Far from being engines of instant gratification, as they are often described, video games are actually, Johnson writes, "all about delayed gratification—sometimes so long delayed that you wonder if the gratification is ever going to show."

At the same time, players are required to manage a dizzying array of information and options. The game presents the player with a series of puzzles, and you can't succeed at the game simply by solving the puzzles one at a time. You have to craft a longer-term strategy, in order to juggle and coördinate competing interests. In denigrating the video game, Johnson argues, we have confused it with other phenomena in teen-age life, like multitasking—simultaneously e-mailing and listening to music and talking on the telephone and surfing the Internet. Playing a video game is, in fact, an exercise in "constructing the proper hierarchy of tasks and moving through the tasks in the correct sequence," he writes. "It's about finding order and meaning in the world, and making decisions that help create that order."

It doesn't seem right, of course, that watching "24" or playing a video game could be as important cognitively as reading a book. Isn't the extraordinary success of the "Harry Potter" novels better news for the culture than the equivalent success of "Grand Theft Auto III"? Johnson's response is to imagine what cultural critics might have said had video games been invented hundreds of years ago, and only recently had something called the book been marketed aggressively to children:

> Reading books chronically understimulates the senses. Unlike the longstanding tradition of gameplaying—which engages the child in a vivid, three-dimensional world filled with moving images and musical soundscapes, navigated and controlled with complex muscular movements—books are simply a barren string of words on the page. . . .
>
> Books are also tragically isolating. While games have for many years engaged the young in complex social relationships with their peers, building and exploring worlds together, books force the child to sequester him or herself in a quiet space, shut off from interaction with other children. . . .
>
> But perhaps the most dangerous property of these books is the fact that they follow a fixed linear path. You can't control their narratives in any fashion—you simply sit back and have the story dictated to you. . . . This risks instilling a general passivity in our children, making them feel as though they're powerless to change their circumstances. Reading is not an active, participatory process; it's a submissive one.

He's joking, of course, but only in part. The point is that books and video games represent two very different kinds of learning. When you read a biology textbook, the content of what you read is what matters. Reading is a form of explicit learning. When you play a video game, the value is in how it makes you think. Video games are an example of collateral learning, which is no less important.

Being "smart" involves facility in both kinds of thinking—the kind of fluid problem solving that matters in things like video games and I.Q. tests, but also the kind of crystallized knowledge that comes from explicit learning. If Johnson's book has a flaw, it is that he sometimes speaks of our culture being "smarter" when he's really referring just to that fluid problem-solving facility. When it comes to the other kind of intelligence, it is not clear at all what kind of progress we are making, as anyone who has read, say, the Gettysburg Address alongside any Presidential speech from the past twenty years can attest. The real question is what the right balance of these two forms of intelligence might look like. "Everything Bad Is Good for You" doesn't answer that question. But Johnson does something nearly as important, which is to remind us that we shouldn't fall into the trap of thinking that explicit learning is the only kind of learning that matters.

In recent years, for example, a number of elementary schools have phased out or reduced recess and replaced it with extra math or English instruction. This is the triumph of the explicit over the collateral. After all, recess is "play" for a ten-year-old in precisely the sense that Johnson describes video games as play for an adolescent: an unstructured environment that requires the child actively to intervene, to look for the hidden logic, to find order and meaning in chaos.

One of the ongoing debates in the educational community, similarly, is over the value of homework. Meta-analysis of hundreds of studies done on the effects of homework shows that the evidence supporting the practice is, at best, modest. Homework seems to be most useful in high school and for subjects like math. At the elementary-school level, homework seems to be of marginal or no academic value. Its effect on discipline and personal responsibility is unproved. And the causal relation between high-school homework and achievement is unclear: it hasn't been firmly established whether spending more time on homework in high school makes you a better student or whether better students, finding homework more pleasurable, spend more time doing it. So why, as a society, are we so enamored of homework? Perhaps because we have so little faith in the value of the things that children would otherwise be doing with their time. They could go out for a walk, and get some exercise; they could spend time with their peers, and reap the rewards of friendship. Or, Johnson suggests, they could be playing a video game, and giving their minds a rigorous workout. ♦

POP MUSIC

THE DECLAIMERS

Two rock bands that want to be heard.

BY SASHA FRERE-JONES

Rock music has rarely encouraged clarity. The most celebrated rock artists of the nineties were proud obscurantists: Beck's songs sounded like Dadaist poems; Nirvana's Kurt Cobain substituted fragments for stories; and Pavement's Stephen Malkmus, a John Ashbery fan, wrote lyrics that were easy to hear but hard to unpack. Rock, during that decade, was a long afternoon of boys staring at one another's shoes and hiding behind noise. The effect was sometimes disappointing, but it made strategic sense. Hip-hop had taken over the franchise for rhymed, metered, sonically aggressive verse and become omnipresent. When the other guy is making a killing on burgers, it pays to sell tacos.

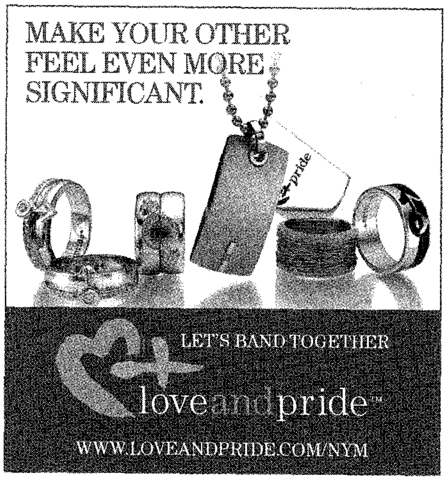
Two noteworthy exceptions to this trend were John Darnielle, who records under the name the Mountain Goats, and Craig Finn, who leads a band called the Hold Steady. Both are rock musicians who behave like hip-hop m.c.s, writing lyrics in complete sentences and delivering their songs emphatically, as though the point of making music is to communicate.

Darnielle grew up in Southern California and was still listening to "The Jungle Book" and "Fiddler on the Roof" in third grade. After high school, he became a psychiatric nurse, and, for a couple of years, lived on the grounds of a mental hospital, where he worked and played the acoustic guitar. He also wrote songs and recorded them on cassette tapes with a Panasonic boom box. In 1992, his friend Dennis Callaci, a musician who sold cassettes of low-fi rock through his label, Shrimper, released a tape of Darnielle's songs called "Taboo VI: The Homecoming." Darnielle went back to school, eventually graduating from college with a degree in English, but he continued to record songs. He took the name the Mountain Goats—though he is often the only Goat recording—and began to tour the country, performing with a bassist, first Rachel Ware and then Peter Hughes.

According to themountaingoats.net, a long-running fan site, the band has recorded four hundred and fifteen songs. Most of these consist simply of Darnielle singing and playing his guitar. The grind of the boom box's capstan is often audible, but it does not overwhelm Darnielle's stentorian voice or his violent strumming; he may be the least self-conscious singer alive. His songs, insistent and stuffed with words, are like late-night pay-phone calls from a lover determined to complete a thought before the quarter runs out—even when the thought is about vegetables. (Darnielle is a vegetarian.)

"The Best Death Metal Band in Denton," from the 2002 album "All Hail West Texas," is a typical Mountain Goats track. Built around a hammering guitar rhythm, the song recounts the story of Cyrus and Jeff, a pair of high-school friends who form a death-metal band. After they draw pentagrams—a symbol associated with Satanism—on their instruments, Cyrus is sent to a reform school: "This was how Cyrus got sent to the school, where they told him he'd never be famous. And this was why Jeff, in the letters he'd write to his friend, helped develop a plan to get even. When you punish a person for dreaming his dream, don't expect him to thank or forgive you. The best ever death metal band out of Denton will in time both outpace and outlive you. Hail Satan!" This may be a song about Columbine, or a joke about singing about death metal (music that is very loud and thick) on an acoustic guitar (which is neither loud nor thick). Either way, Cyrus and Jeff are familiar Mountain Goats characters, long on bad luck and short on problem-solving skills, and Darnielle, through his poetry, grants them the dignity that eludes them in their lives.

Darnielle does not resemble the underdogs he writes about. In concert, he smiles and talks easily to the crowd. When he performs, he hollers like a preacher, and some shows include an audience sing-along of a Gaelic drinking tune. I've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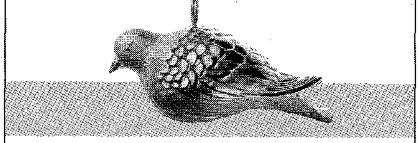
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For John Darnielle (standing) and Craig Finn, the point of making music is to communicate. Photographs by Steve Pyke.

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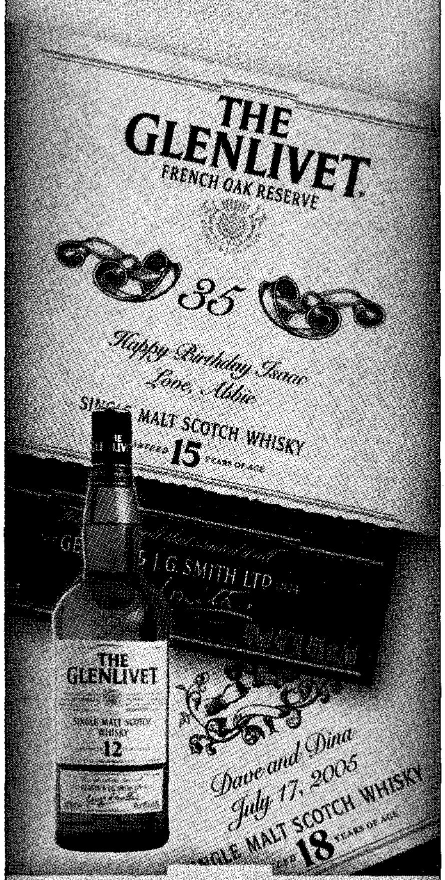

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seen him live seven times, and I've never brought a guest who wasn't converted by the end of the night. The Mountain Goats are no longer the kind of band that you would find only in a mail-order catalogue. The group's last three albums were recorded entirely in a studio, and the most recent, "The Sunset Tree," which was released this month, features a full band, including a drummer, a pianist, and a cellist.

The album's genteel sound would not be out of place on a Starbucks CD, yet the lyrics are anything but anodyne. The first track, "You or Your Memory," begins with what could be a reminiscence of high-school debauchery: "St. Joseph's Baby Aspirin, Bartles and Jaymes and you, or your memory." When the moon goes down, the narrator starts to wonder whether he'll last the night, setting the tone for a series of increasingly grim songs. (The album is dedicated to "young men and women anywhere who live with people who abuse them.") In "Broom People," Darnielle sings, "I write down good reasons to freeze to death in my spiral-ring notebook." He perks up on "This Year," a defiant anthem to survival: "I played video games in a drunken haze, I was seventeen years young. Hurt my knuckles punching the machines, the taste of Scotch rich on my tongue. And then Cathy showed up, and we hung out, trading swigs from a bottle, all bitter and clean, locking eyes, holding hands, twin high-maintenance machines. I am going to make it through this year if it kills me."

The idea of the Mountain Goats has always involved a bit of ontological slapstick: Darnielle walks onstage with his guitar and introduces himself by saying, "Hi, we're the Mountain Goats." For Darnielle, America's best non-hip-hop lyricist, being in a band is a feint.

For Craig Finn, by contrast, being in a band is the real thing. He made his name as the songwriter and singer for Lifter Puller, a Minneapolis hard-rock group, before moving to Brooklyn and forming the Hold Steady. Finn sings about being in a bar band and refers to rock stars—Rick Danko, Patty Smyth, Rod Stewart—in his songs.

The Hold Steady seems to be a mathematically derived average of dozens of seventies and eighties hard-rock bands. Every track on the group's excellent new album, "Separation Sunday," sounds like the beginning or the end of a song you already know—perhaps by Cheap Trick, or by Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band—except for Finn's vocals. It is almost a mistake to call him a singer, though he is the one with the microphone. (The band is anchored by Bobby Drake, the drummer, and Tad Kubler, the guitarist, who can duplicate classic seventies rock solos and swing his instrument around his waist like a hula hoop.)

"Separation Sunday" begins with Finn's voice, unaccompanied: "She says always remember, and never to trust me. Ah, she said that first night that she met me. She said there's gonna come a time, when I'm gonna have to go with whoever's gonna get me the highest." Then the music kicks in, a Wal-Mart-style twofer of Aerosmith and Molly Hatchet. Finn rarely sings melodies—he lets the band play them—but his lyrics are the best part, simultaneously jokes and hooks, like these lines from "Stevie Nix": "She got screwed up by religion. She got screwed by soccer players. She got high for the first time in the camps down by the banks of the Mississippi River. Lord to be seventeen forever."

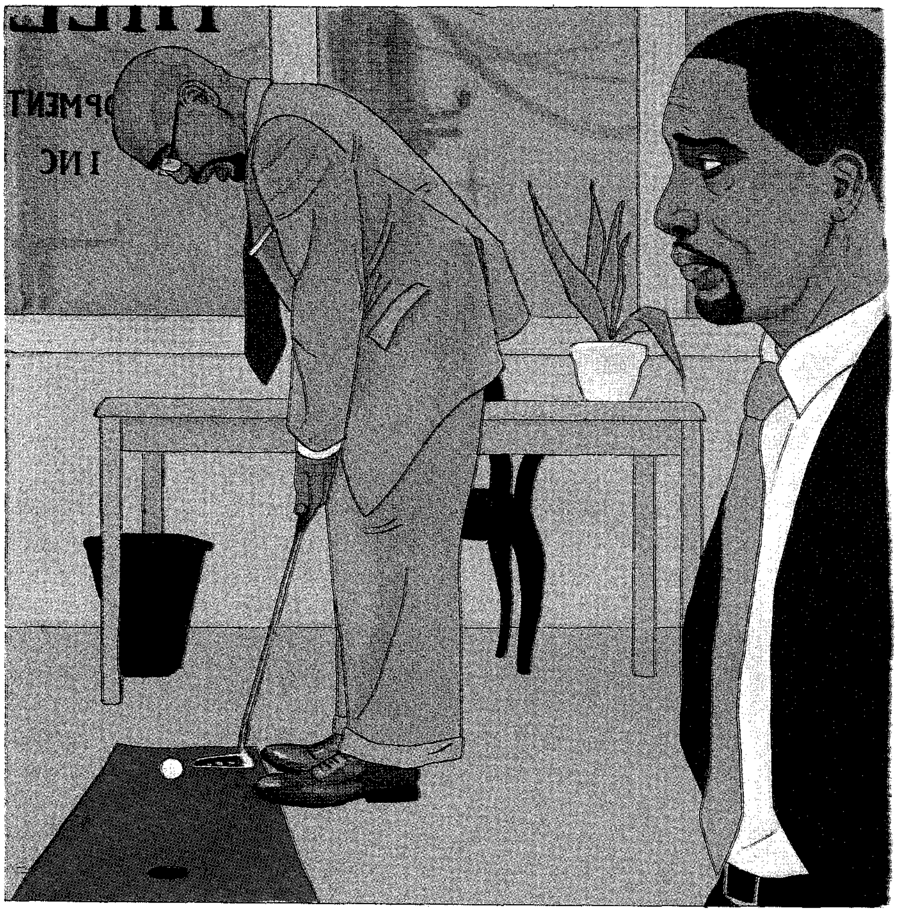
At the Bowery Ballroom in April, Finn led the Hold Steady in an aggressive, torqued-up set. Finn, a short, bespectacled fellow, exerted himself even when nothing much was going on, smacking his head with his hand, and pointing at everything—the lights, himself, the air, the crowd. After listening to three taut, vehement songs, a woman in the audience turned to a friend and said, "He's the sexiest man alive." But several people in attendance did not agree. They were waiting for the headlining band, Eagles of Death Metal, an unremarkable hard-rock act with little of Finn's self-awareness, and none of his skill with words. As Finn started "The Swish," the closest song the band has to a hit, hecklers interrupted with taunts of "You suck"—and worse. Finn yowled on: "Pills and powders, baby, powders and pills. We spent the night last night in Beverly Hills. There was this chick that looked like Beverly Sills. We got killed." Finn's face was red, but he was smiling. He absorbed the crowd's pique like a carburetor drawing in air. When the song was over, Finn took his last sip of free beer and waved good night. Fans and foes, we had heard him loud and clear. ♦

THE THEATRE

HILL STREET BLUES

The final installment of August Wilson's masterwork.

BY JOHN LAHR



James A. Williams and Richard Brooks as slick real-estate developers in "Radio Golf."

The world première of August Wilson's "Radio Golf," at the Yale Repertory, in New Haven, two weeks ago, made a little bit of American theatre history. "Radio Golf," directed by Timothy Douglas, is the final installment of Wilson's unprecedented, magisterial ten-play cycle, each part of which chronicles a decade of African-American life in the twentieth century. Wilson's output and quality, over the past twenty-four years, have been extraordinary. (The only other playwright to embark on as ambitious an endeavor was Eugene O'Neill, and he completed just two parts of what was to have been an eleven-play cycle.) At least six of the plays in Wilson's series—"Ma Rainey's Black Bottom," "The Piano Lesson," "Seven Guitars," "Fences," "Two Trains Running," and "Gem of the Ocean"—are, I think, first-rate, and one, "Joe Turner's Come and Gone," is a masterpiece. (Some of the glory of this accomplishment belongs to Wilson's primary director, Lloyd Richards, and to his co-producer, Benjamin Mordecai.) Taken as a whole, the cycle, with its humor and its poetic scope, both claims and interprets, for black and white audiences, the experience and the idiom of the African-American world.

At the center of each of Wilson's plays is the frustration of black enterprise in relation to capital—his characters are forever unable to realize their potential. (Wilson has addressed this problem in his own life by becoming a co-producer of his work; this has given him the latitude to launch several different productions and rewrite extensively before the final version of one of his plays arrives in New York. The process doesn't insure success, but it does allow him to work as an artist before taking his chances in Broadway's commercial crapshoot.) "Radio Golf" tells the story of two slick former college roommates, Harmond Wilks (Richard Brooks) and Roosevelt Hicks (James A. Williams), upwardly mobile black men who are trying to redevelop and gentrify the Hill district of Pittsburgh, the ghetto where Wilson himself came of age. Although the play cycle has reached the nineteen-nineties, Wilson's characters are still under assault, still marginalized, still living in substandard housing, still struggling to find both work and acceptance in the dominant culture. His heroes here, however, have learned how to play the dominant culture's game. "Politics is about symbolism," Harmond says, explaining why he needs to set up his headquarters in a seedy Hill Street storefront. "Black people don't vote but they have symbolic weight. You can cash in on that."

As the play opens, Harmond is about to be tapped as the Democratic candidate for mayor; the multimillion-dollar Bedford Hills redevelopment project is nearly financed; the partners are about to buy a local radio station; and when Harmond's wife, Mame (Michele Shay), asks for money to take a trip he writes her a check without blinking. "Ten thousand dollars will barely make it," she tells him. Golf—with its lavish disregard for time and money—is a symbol of the two men's bourgeois achievement (and of their burden, which is to assume the attitudes and the leisure activities of the white man). Roosevelt is planning to build a golf course on the Hill. A memory of hitting a golf ball is for him what the green light at the end of the dock was for Gatsby. "I watched the ball soar down the driving range," he tells Harmond. "I felt something lift off of me. Some weight I was carrying around and didn't know it. I felt like the world was open to me. Everything and everybody."

The only grit in the Bedford Hills oyster is offstage: a dilapidated house on the redevelopment site which someone keeps painting in garish colors, even though it is about to be demolished. The house, it turns out, is at 1839 Wylie—an address that should put Wilson fans on

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instant Allegory Alert. In Wilson's theatrical mythology, this is the home of the late Aunt Esther, a mystical character who is the repository of all black tradition. ("Gem of the Ocean" introduces her, and she dies, at the age of three hundred and sixty-six, in "King Hedley II.") Through the ensuing struggle for control of the house, Wilson demonstrates what he sees as the failure of the black middle class to return its expertise and sophistication to the impoverished community that it rose from—and which, in "Radio Golf," appears to be on the verge of extinction. The property at 1839 Wylie has been repossessed for nonpayment of taxes; the "trespasser" who keeps painting the house turns out to be its owner, the Bolshie, uneducated Old Joe Barlow (the entertaining Anthony Chisholm), who insists—rightly—that he was never notified about the taxes due. He is undaunted by Roosevelt's legal threats. "You act like you a rooster," he says. "You the King of the Barnyard. You strut through the barnyard during the day. At night you roost high up on the rafters. But when you get to the bottom of it, a rooster ain't nothing but a chicken."

In the argument over the derelict house, one incontrovertible fact emerges: it was improperly purchased by the Bedford Hills group. To Roosevelt, this is a legal hiccup; to Harmond, it is a moral one. When Old Joe refuses Harmond's offer of ten thousand dollars in restitution, Harmond has a change of heart. He decides to preserve the house and redesign his architectural plans to incorporate it. "I figured it out," he tells his wife as he hangs a new banner on the storefront which reads, "1839 WYLIE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT." "It's not about redevelopment, it's about preserving what's here and building on that." At this point in the windy, schematic exercise, Harmond's friendship with Roosevelt, his business deal, his political career, and his marriage all collapse. Nonetheless, at the finale, he has the last laugh. "He is a man who has been bleeding and didn't know he was cut," the stage direction reads. "It is the laugh of a man who has severed his bonds and is truly free." Harmond's onstage transformation, unfortunately, doesn't ring true—it is willed but not achieved. Wilson has yet to find the dynamic event that would turn his hero's psychology into credible behavior.

When he was writing "Radio Golf," Wilson says, he was listening to Three Dog Night's "The Show Must Go On." A line from the song stuck in his head: "I wish maybe they'd tear down the walls of this theatre and let me out." "That's the way I felt," Wilson says. He's not out yet. By the time "Radio Golf" makes it through one or two more productions, if he's true to form, Wilson will have discovered his play; it will be more focussed, more poetic, leaner, and more fun. At the moment, because the golf metaphor is poorly integrated, and so much needs to be winnowed out of the humorous set pieces, it's hard to see the play through the exposition. Still, whether it's a success or not hardly matters to the reputation of the cycle; Wilson is a heavyweight, and his œuvre is a glorious and enduring victory.

"Sweet Charity" (in revival at the Al Hirschfeld), Neil Simon's sanitized musical version of Fellini's "Nights of Cabiria," asks the question, Can a dance-hall hostess with a heart of gold, great legs, and nine songs find true love? The answer, evidently, is no. In the course of this noisy evening, Charity (Christina Applegate) is trapped in a pond, a closet, a dance hall, an elevator, and a Ferris wheel. Everything happens to her; nothing happens to us. Every blinking light, every grinding body, every gaudy costume is dedicated to mindlessness; Sweet Charity is not the only one who's stuck in the shallows.

Applegate, who became famous during eleven seasons of "Married . . . with Children," is making her Broadway début. She is bona fide adorable, and her megawatt buoyancy could persuade a paying customer to forgive almost anything, even the microphone planted like Ash Wednesday ashes in the center of her forehead. The splendid Denis O'Hare gives Simon's lacklustre book an eccentric wallop, too; his neurotic Oscar Lindquist, who loves and then leaves the tart with a heart, is at once vivid and poignant. But although the songs "Big Spender" and "If My Friends Could See Me Now" came from the show, Cy Coleman's score and Dorothy Fields's lyrics are, for the most part, just glib. The director, Walter Bobbie, keeps the amperage high and the cleavage low. If "Sweet Charity" runs, it'll be running, believe me, on empty. ♦

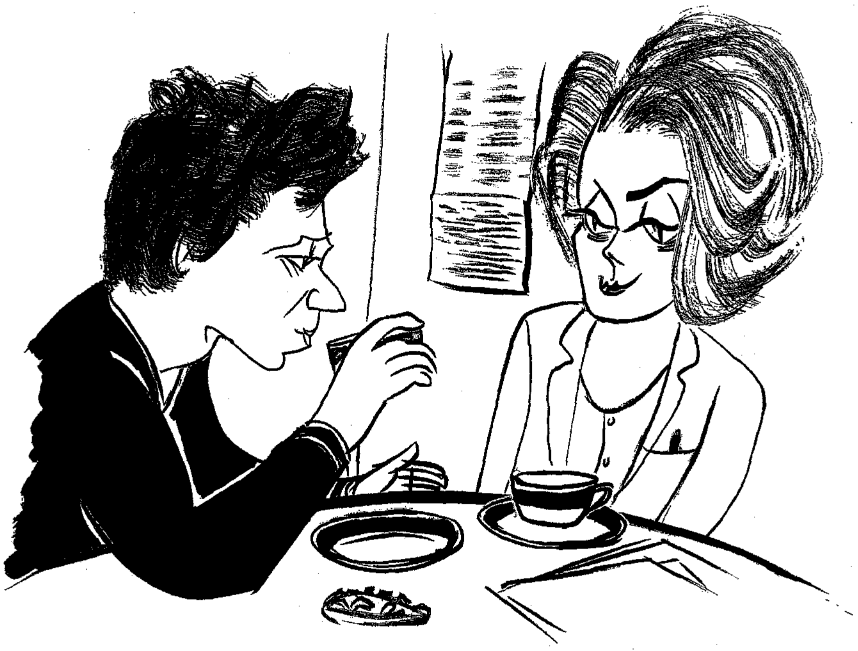
THE CURRENT CINEMA

ROYALTY

"Kings and Queen" and "Monster-in-Law."

BY DAVID DENBY

In "Kings and Queen," Nora (Emmanuelle Devos), a Parisian bourgeoise and gallery manager in her thirties, goes to Grenoble to visit her father, a famous writer and teacher, who is looking after her son for the summer. But the father becomes ill, and Nora winds up attending him as he dies of cancer. Does she really love this imperious and distant old man? And what does he feel for her? Nora comes off as quivering and defenseless—she often breaks into tears—but also, after a while, as slyly selfish. We can't always read her. At the same time, in a parallel story, her ex-boyfriend Ismaël (Mathieu Amalric), a manic-depressive with bright eyes and the eager manner of a cocky teen-ager, argues merrily with two orderlies who arrive at his apartment to cart him off to the loony bin. Ismaël, a violist in a string quartet, is being committed by a colleague, who, not surprisingly, finds him a pain in the neck. Antic and insulting with the orderlies, Ismaël is a brilliant clown who finds his own rants so amusing that, once he gets started, he can't stop. In the hospital, he charms a suicidal young woman into falling in love with him, and engages in philosophical discussions with a tough-talking psychiatrist, played by Catherine Deneuve. Is he crazy, or is he playing at madness, Hamlet-like, to put others on the defensive? There's logic and intellectual strength in his discourse, and more than a little humanity, too.



Mathieu Amalric and Catherine Deneuve in Arnaud Desplechin's new movie.

Over the years, we have seen so many French films make a fetish of precision that it's startling to see something from France that is freewheeling, explosive, and rather slovenly. "Kings and Queen," written (in collaboration with Roger Bohbot) and directed by Arnaud Desplechin, is, by any normal standard, a mess. It's vaguely structured, a thing of stops and starts: some strong scenes arrive without much preparation; other, better-prepared, moments work up a head of steam but go nowhere. The color palette is at times watery. The music, which ranges from Henry Mancini's wan "Moon River" (used with baffling irony) to a spikily

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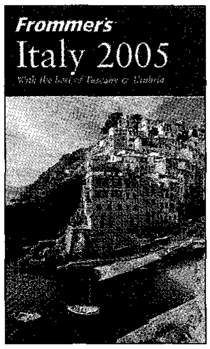

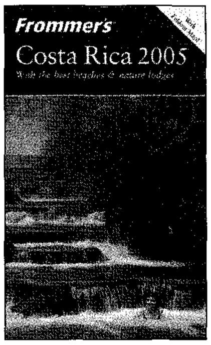

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beautiful chamber-orchestra piece by Anton Webern, is erratic at best. There's not much connection, physically or spiritually, between Nora and Ismaël, and it's hard to imagine that they were once lovers. She is guarded and disingenuous, and he can't help revealing himself in every gesture and word.

Yet this movie, however incomplete and frustrating, is also fully alive and extraordinarily intelligent. Desplechin, who is forty-four, and whose best-known previous work is "My Sex Life . . . or How I Got Into an Argument," from 1996, is often described as "gifted," a word usually used to praise children. It implies an abundant talent that hasn't yet come under control. Much of "My Sex Life" consists of young male philosophy instructors talking excitedly about women—the low chatter of brainy post-adolescents. The man who made "Kings and Queen" still enjoys the preening egotism of highly articulate young men (Amalric's Ismaël is like an overgrown boy). And, as a director, Desplechin is not about to censor a flourish of rhetoric or emotion that doesn't quite fit into his film: "Kings and Queen" is full of awkwardly memorable moments. Ismaël has poignant conversations with the young woman in the hospital, played by Magali Woch, who has an expression of unappeasable yearning. When Nora reads her father's final book—a journal of his late years—she comes across a devastating passage about herself. Her father describes her with such acute distaste that the entire movie gets flipped around, and we see Nora in a completely different way. Devos is not a decisive enough actress to bring duplicity to life, the way Bette Davis or Mary Astor once would have. But Amalric grows in interest. By the end, his Ismaël, having lost many things, has calmed down, and he's ready to move on. His director may be ready to do the same.

In "Monster-in-Law," a comedy set in L.A., there are banks of flowers everywhere—moist, rolling tapestries of petals laid out in private homes, on the sets of TV talk shows, in restaurants. In case we miss the blooming-and-blossoming theme, the heroine, Charlie (Jennifer Lopez), a Venice Beach free spirit who works as a dog-walker, caterer, and temp, also paints floral whatnots on the walls of her apartment. The sun shines unrelentingly, and the people are awfully sweet—everyone, that is, except for Jane Fonda, who, in a misguided "comeback," gives an embarrassing performance as a virago. "Monster-in-Law" is a lame, unofficial spinoff of "Meet the Parents." In this version, Lopez turns up as the Ben Stiller outsider. Her Charlie falls in love with a dreamboat (Michael Vartan), and Fonda, in the equivalent of the De Niro role, is a neurotic dragon who wants to keep the dreamboat—her son—all to herself. A Barbara Walters-type great lady of TV news, Fonda's character, Viola, has recently been dumped from her job, and she has turned sodden and self-pitying. She objects to Charlie for all sorts of reasons, though she never mentions what her snobbish character is most likely to find amiss—the fact that Charlie is a Latina. You can see the strategic thinking here: Lopez is a big crossover star; why dramatize the issue of ethnicity? Someone, somewhere, in some corner of the world, might get upset. This way, the combat between the two women, however malevolent and ridiculous, somehow remains *clean.* Viola tries to drive Charlie away by playing nasty tricks on her, and Charlie fights back, until the two women, all dressed up on the wedding day, take turns whamming each other across the face. None of this Three Stoogian warfare, however, ruffles the vapidity of "Monster-in-Law." Charlie has nothing in her head—not an idea, a passion, a taste for anything. She's just a nice girl who wants to cuddle with her beau and disappear into the roses-and-petunias gentility of California kitsch.

O.K., it's silly to get upset. "Monster-in-Law" is a commercial product, as squarely aimed at teen-age girls as an advertisement for pink cell phones. Still, the self-confident fatuity and condescension of the movie is offensive. Jennifer Lopez has beautiful skin and a marvellous figure, but if she's trying to achieve something in her movie work, I can't tell what it is. Except for a few minutes in "Out of Sight," she's been wasting her time. In this movie, her eyes are empty, and her delivery lags an instant behind the beat. In making her character so dim and bland, the filmmakers—the writer, Anya Kochoff, and the director, Robert Luketic—are as insulting as Viola in their limited notion of what's acceptable. And they've matched Lopez with another cipher: Michael Vartan, who is supposed to be a talented surgeon. Vartan has a cleft chin and a warming smile; he's certainly very handsome, but what kind of romantic hero fails to stick up for his fiancée when his rampaging mom tries to annihilate her? The cad! This smart young surgeon never notices what's going on. I know "Monster-in-Law" is just a slapstick comedy, but is it too much to expect the characters to exhibit routine intelligence? The only person in the movie who's not a dummy is Wanda Sykes, as Viola's wisecracking assistant. In movies and television, there's a long, honorable tradition, still alive, of the straight-talking sidekick, but, in the clichéd context of "Monster-in-Law," having a black servant around to talk back to her mistress is a mortifying reversion to comic devices from sixty years ago, when Eddie Anderson's Rochester sassed Jack Benny.

At an enormous house party, Fonda, wearing a turban, throws up her arms in greeting, like Lucille Ball going all giddy in "Mame." Putting her famous body into it, she pops her eyes and snaps her head back and laughs hysterically. Perhaps only a very earnest liberal could play a name-dropping, millionaire harpy with such dedication, but Fonda is so strenuous that she's almost unwatchable. I hope this isn't her last movie performance; it would serve as a gruesome end to what has been a striking, if somewhat aborted, career. As a young woman, Fonda was a Hollywood princess who disdained the prerogatives of royalty. She wanted to make her own way, and she apprenticed herself to Lee Strasberg's Method, in New York. You could always see the determination that went into her acting—she was never a natural, with a flowing, lyrical gift. The temperamental traits she drew on, apart from will, seemed to be anxiety and anger, and, at her best, working on nerve and instinct, she took chances that most actresses would have shied away from. She was bitterly intelligent—hard-tempered and fast—in "They Shoot Horses, Don't They?" (1969) and "Klute" (1971) and, much later, as the alcoholic, washed-up actress in Sidney Lumet's "The Morning After" (1986). Then, interested in too many other things, she pretty much dropped out of acting. It's too bad that, realizing her own singular nature, she didn't find a few screenwriters to create substantial roles for her in smaller projects, and a couple of good directors willing to work on them. At the age of sixty-seven, she could still pull this off, if she wanted to. It wouldn't be easy, of course, but there was never anything serious that she couldn't do once she put her mind to it. ♦

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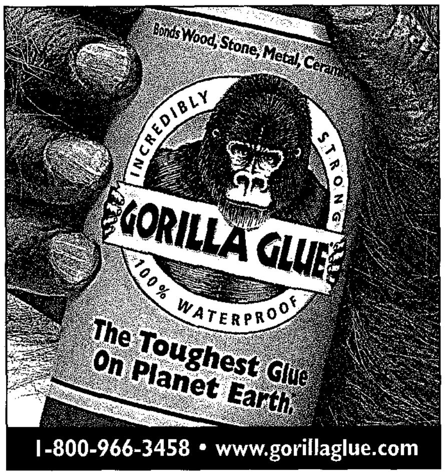
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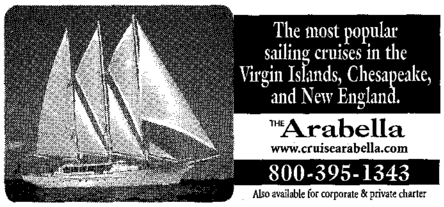

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"This is my stop. Phil, you'll be C.E.O.
till Sixty-third Street."
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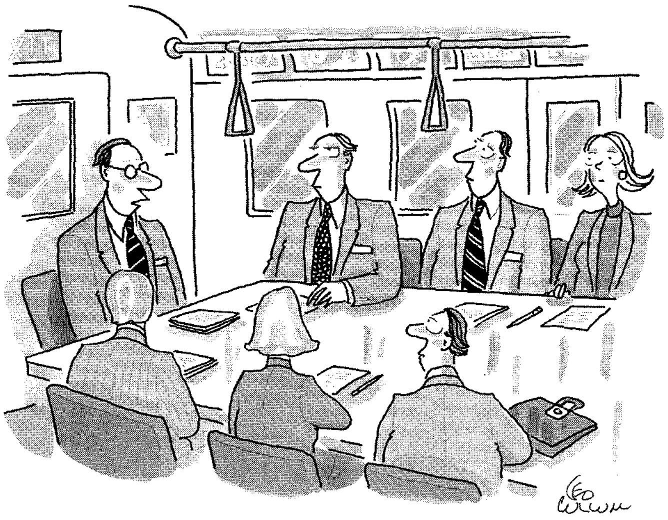

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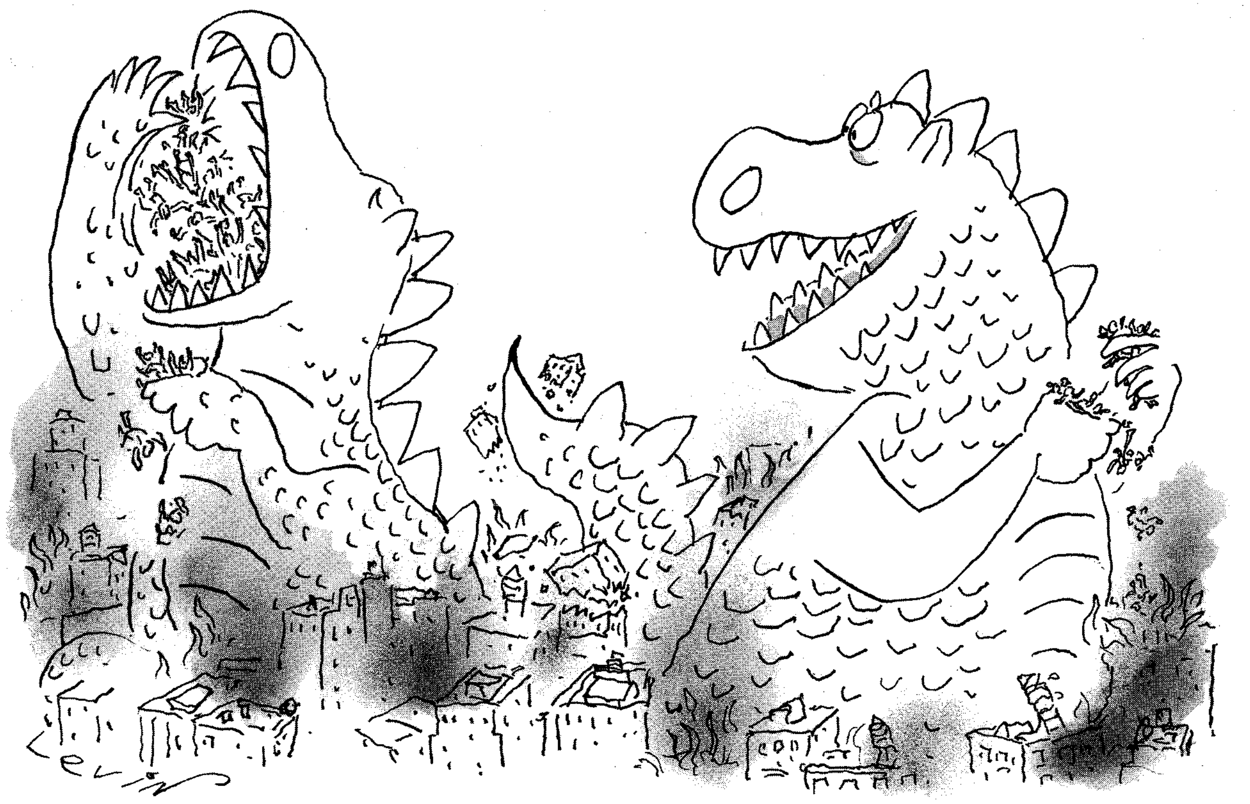
Each week, we provide a cartoon in need of a caption. You, the reader, submit a caption, we choose three finalists, and you vote for your favorite. Caption submissions for this week's cartoon, by Arnie Levin, must be received by Sunday, May 15th. Finalists in the May 2nd contest appear above; go online to vote. We will announce the winner, along with the finalists in this week's contest, in the May 30th issue. The winner will be given a signed print of the cartoon. Any U.S. resident age eighteen or over can enter or vote. To do so, and to read the complete rules, visit www.newyorker.com/captioncontest.

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST



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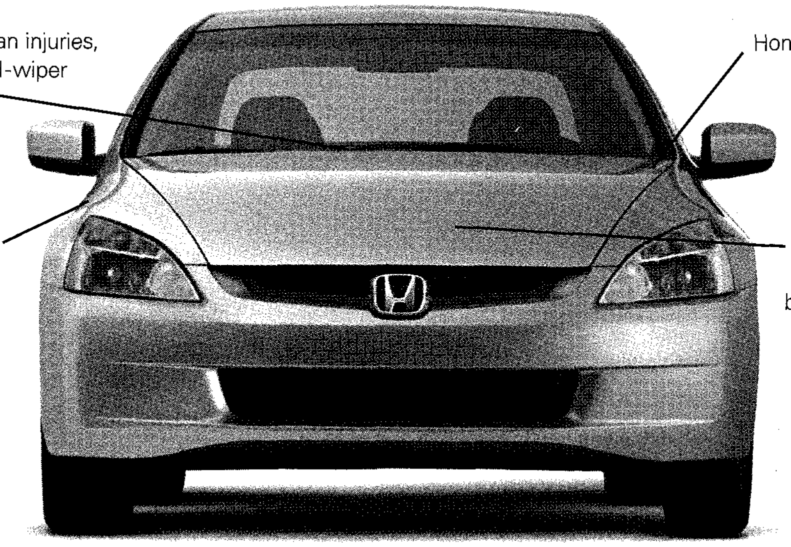

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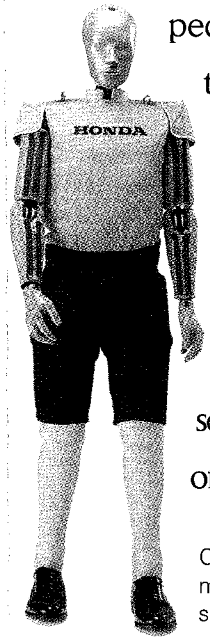

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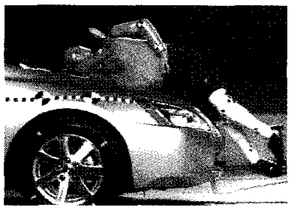

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